

# CRIMES' PARADISE



CRIMES'  
PARADISE

BY  
**E.E. KIRKPATRICK**

THE AUTHENTIC STORY OF  
THE URSCHEL KIDNAPPING



DANIEL  
ESSER



# CRIMES' PARADISE

The Authentic Inside-story of The Urschel Kidnapping

BY

**E. E. KIRKPATRICK**





To my friend  
J. N. McLean

CRIMES'  
PARADISE

Wm. W. W. W.  
O. W. 6/5/35

Book 1-6  
1891-1892

To  
Mission  
with Best Wishes

E. L. Singfatuk





MR. and MRS. CHARLES F. URSCHEL  
AND  
THEIR HOME.



# CRIMES' PARADISE

The Authentic Inside Story  
of The Urschel Kidnapping

By  
E. E. KIRKPATRICK



SKETCHES and LAYOUTS

By  
DANIEL ESSER



THE NAYLOR COMPANY  
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the publisher.

To

*Berenice Urschel whose unfaltering courage, and admirable poise, were the prime contributing factors in the safe return of Charles F. Urschel and the avoidance of what might have been a most grievous tragedy, I respectfully dedicate this volume—*



## INTRODUCTION

Whatever may be the depths of his cultural attainments or the extent of his education, there is rarely to be found a man who does not turn to detective tales for relaxation and enjoyment. The mystery surrounding the commission of crime, the ingenuity displayed by those who unravel the story have always attracted the average busy individual. By far the larger part of detective literature is purely fictional. Plots are woven out of imagination and solved by the same method. Whether they have the clever, subtle deductions of Conan Doyle, the wierd oriental mysticisms of Sax Rohmer, or the blunt, tireless sleuthing of Edgar Wallace, the reader knows the thing never actually happened, and thus he can forget all about it in a hour or two.

There is a cant old phrase which says that "Truth is stranger than Fiction," and in this vivid story, "Crimes' Paradise," Ernest Kirkpatrick has given his readers a narrative which emphasizes the veracity of that adage. The scenes are familiar to everyday life. The characters

are flesh and blood men and women. The detectives who found the seemingly undiscovered answer to the riddle, are not imaginary sleuths, but highly trained, splendidly courageous and doggedly persistent operatives of a branch of the Federal Government which neither tires nor sleeps.

The emphatic impression left with me after reading the recital of this amazing occurrence, is admiration for the personnel of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. In the battle with crime which America has been fighting during the fifteen sad years of the Prohibition era, state, county, and municipal agencies of law enforcement have proved ineffectual. This is due to some extent perhaps to the interference of venal politics, but whatever the reason, in extreme cases, results have been obtained almost wholly by Federal forces.

In his splendid book, Mr. Kirkpatrick pays a well deserved tribute to Edgar Hoover and the men of his organization. To the knowing, the name "Scotland Yard" signifies the greatest crime detective agency in the world, and the books in which this great department of English government has figured have been at least



partially responsible for its reputation. Mr. Hoover's organization is the Scotland Yard of the United States, but because these men deliberately avoid sensational publicity, the ordinary citizen probably never realizes how many vicious schemes they have thwarted or the manner in which they have flung back a challenge to hoodlumism. They do, nevertheless, keep a finger always upon the pulse of crime. There is a similarity in their methods to the scientific hunting after oil. They are, it may be said, always "on location." Where the modern scientist finds productive indication far under the surface of the earth by the mystic vibrations of the siesmograph, Hoover's men are the psychological engineers who use their own uncanny deductions to hunt down the possible perpetrators of a crime. When news of the Urschel kidnapping was flashed to them in Washington at midnight, by daybreak they had selected a possible dozen men as the logical criminals. "Kirk's" tribute to Hoover and Gus Jones, and the others, is richly merited, and if the book serves no other purpose than to impress upon the American people the inestimable value of their own "Scot-

land Yard" it will have made a patriotic contribution, in what should be a universal endeavor to keep that organization free from the political interference which hampers so many of the agencies of our government.

Kirkpatrick's book contains many cross currents, and is vivid with the color of the old Southwest. The trails of this crime follow the ancient paths that knew violence and terror in the past. It impresses the reader with the swift evolution of outlawry within one generation, for it seems indeed a far cry from the saddle horse to the sixteen-cylinder car, yet within the scope of a single lifetime, the change has been made. Bob Dalton challenged society with a single action six-shooter, and in the same area and only a few years later, George Kelly made his last desperate stand with a sub-machine gun. When the Jennings rode some forty years ago, there was not even a telephone with which to trace their movements, while the news of the Urschel crime crackled over unseen wires through limitless space ten minutes after its commission. The most amazing fact in all this amazing medley of deeds, however, is that the crime was solved by the

faint hum of an aeroplane winging over the vastness of the Texas Panhandle.

The flavor of the Southwest, the epic struggle to bring law and order to the last frontier, runs like a strain of reminiscent music through the volume. The dim trails made by Sam Bass, the Daltons, Bill Doolin, and hundreds of other notorious characters, are now highways over which the 1933 model of the outlaw travels. That they are a different order of men, and live under a different code does not matter. Each, in his own way lost the battle. The old school bandit died with his boots on and his face to the foe. The modern kind shoots as he runs away, and to one familiar with the romantic history of the West, the modern sort has nothing of the chivalry or glamour of Robin Hood that surrounded the terrifying names of yesterday. I cannot imagine Kelly participating in the Coffeyville bank robbery, or Albert Bates holding up a passenger train. Dick Yeager's code was an even break, which he always gave, even though he might not always get it. The modern criminal, compared with the old, cannot even be dignified by the term of "bandit." He is the spawn of the prohibition era,

the product of venal political corruption, and unlike Sam Bass, will be unsung by future generations.

If there is any single criticism to be directed against this book it could be outlined in a sentence—there is not enough of "Kirk" in it. Mr. Kirkpatrick has given only the most meager details of his part in the biggest battle against crime this generation has known. He modestly effaces himself, and minimizes his heroic work in the struggle with the unseen enemy. While he gives generously of his praise to others, he fails to stress his effort in the capture of the criminals, yet his particular friends in Tulsa know the strain under which he labored during those nerve racking days between the abduction of his friend and the capture of the kidnappers. Roused one hot July midnight, supplied with only the meagerest information, he made a lonely desperate drive to the scene. After a swift race over the highway between Tulsa and Oklahoma City, his heart torn with concern and fear for his friend, he was on hand in two hours to give his help. From that moment until the final chapter was written in the lurid story, he never for a



moment relaxed or deviated from his fixed purpose. He dedicated his life to the safe return of his friend, and he swore vengeance on the authors of the hideous crime. Braving every danger, oblivious to all threats, he enlisted for the duration of the war and was at the front in every engagement. Imbued with the spirit of the Texas Ranger, who heeds only the call of duty, Kirk left the comforts and happiness that fortune has given him, and set forth upon a dangerous quest. He joined at once with the Federal agents and followed their directions explicitly, never knowing whether he could come out alive. He makes but little of the dramatic incident in Kansas City when, covered by menacing machine guns, he delivered the ransom money. Charles Urschel was indeed fortunate to have had a friend like Ernest Kirkpatrick available during the most hazardous days of his life.

The tribute paid to Charles Urschel through the book is richly deserved and voices the sentiment of all who know this remarkable and courageous man. All America owes much to Charles Urschel. With superb bravery, under terrific strain,

he abandoned thought for his personal safety and after the return from his cruel captivity, he issued a challenge to gangland. In his determination, his wholehearted cooperation with authority, his conduct stands out as a premier sacrifice of the generation, and as a major contribution to good citizenship.

If this introduction is too long, let my excuse be that I am moved by the warmest admiration for the characters who conducted the battle of the century against the most sinister forces of evil this age has known. Kirkpatrick has, I think, recounted a drama that will live because it contains all the elements of an immortal folk tale, a tale that is filled with romance, struggle, glamour, horror, and high courage, set against a back-drop rich with the vivid colors of the old West.

WALTER FERGUSON

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GUS T. JONES

SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE,  
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION,  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

# CRIMES' PARADISE

## CHAPTER I

### VULTURES

A lone buzzard circled lazily high in the hot July air. In long graceful curves he swept downward, then upward, imitating faultlessly the best exhibits of modern airmen. Suddenly, from out the north-western sky, sounded a throbbing hum which grew increasingly plaintive and impressive. Then, straight into the narrowing circles the buzzard was describing, a high-powered dual-motored monoplane drove with a speed that dwarfed its animate air rival. The buzzard swooped low and cut a sharp tangent as the plane zoomed southeastward at roaring speed. Each morning for many days the buzzard had played this game of tag with the big man-controlled bird, always to become abruptly frightened and seek protection in a tree-covered valley.

On Sunday, July 30, 1933, an unexpected rain squall drove the playful buzzard to a sheltered stream. The storm

## CRIMES' PARADISE

also forced the pilot, on his daily airplane flight, to cut a wide arc to the northward thus to avoid the rolling thunderheads and electrical disturbance.

God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. The buzzard had no known part in God's plans, but the rainstorm and the airplane did, and were mute instrumentalities in solving the greatest kidnapping case in history.

The wide expanses of Texas, stretching from the rolling sand-bottomed, wind-swept meanderings of Red River on the north, to the Mexican border on the south; from the tide-lapped beaches of Corpus Christi on the east to the foothills of the Rockies on the west, have been the stage of swift and violent scenes since the days of Coronado.

Into her history is warped the romance and violence of more noted outlaws and gunmen than any other state of the Union. The long sinuous eleven hundred miles of the Rio Grande constituting her southern boundary has witnessed, since the memorable Battle of San Jacinto, ten thousand peace time slayings of smugglers, of "gringo" rustlers, or "greaser" bandits.

## VULTURES

The scalp-taking Apaches and Comanches from Oklahoma and the cruel Yaqui Indians of western Mexico took their periodical toll of the sturdy frontiersmen who deigned to establish a civilization in the Lone Star State. All this was decades ago. Law and order finally prevailed, aided greatly at first by gun fire and much rope. Following the well-known history of ages Texas went from one extreme to the other. The state passed from the ribald, rip-roaring, shooting stage to a Puritanical set-up.

Horse racing was banned. Gambling was outlawed. Sunday shows were barred. It was made an offense to produce a deck of cards and play solitaire on a train passing through the state. Texas never does things on a small scale. Her senior Senator at Washington introduced the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

The illegal and ill-fated marriage of that Noble Experiment of Prohibition with Unashamed Graft spawned its bastard minions of crimes, both petty and grand, upon the entire nation. The resulting deluge besmirched with suspicion al-



## CRIMES' PARADISE

most every agency of law enforcement national, state and municipal and sometimes reached even to the judiciary. Back to Texas came outlawry of a different brand from the old days.

Three thousand feet below the place of the buzzard's daily rendezvous with his aerial rival, in a dirty shack near Paradise, Texas, lay one of America's foremost private citizens, handcuffed, blindfolded, shackled with chains, a prisoner of one of the most vicious, cunning, ruthless gangs of kidnapers known in the annals of crime.

A cardinal singing from the bushes of a wild-plum thicket suddenly flitted to the corner of the weather-worn porch of the old shack. The brilliant splotch of feathered scarlet tilted himself, assuredly, on a broken shingle and took a slight peep through the window. What he saw disturbed the nature of that innocent and beautiful denizen of those rural woods.

Prone on the rough board floor stretched six feet one of rugged American manhood, his manacled hands fastened to a baby's high-chair, his eyes effectually taped, his legs enmeshed in chains. At

## VULTURES

one side, in a cane-bottomed chair, sat a sinister-looking old man with blinking eyes and a sawed-off shot gun menacingly pointed toward the prone figure.

The surrounding farm, which comprised five hundred forty acres, boasted another and more pretentious dwelling.

This farm was the haven of safety for bank-robbers, train-robbers, murderers, escaped convicts, rum-runners and kidnappers. It was the "cooling off" place after "hot" jobs. The environment was ideal. Here the sun shone three hundred days in the year. Birds sang their lullabies in December. Southern breezes cooled the summer evenings' twilight. No inquisitive sheriff or officer of the law ever intruded upon the premises. Here was the atmosphere of tranquility, peacefulness and absolute safety for criminals, vouchsafed by no other rural retreat in the South. It was indeed CRIMES' PARADISE.

## CHAPTER II

### A DEMAND BID

On the night of July 22, 1933, at 11:25 o'clock p. m., Charles F. Urschel and his wife, Berenice, recently wedded, were playing bridge with neighbor friends, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jarrett, on the sun porch of the beautiful Urschel home, at 327 Northwest 18th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The screen door opened suddenly. Two husky hoodlums, one carrying a machine gun, the other a six-shooter, entered and covered the bridge players with the guns. The machine gunner, obviously nervous and highly excited, jerked out in staccato—

"Stick 'em up—we want Urschel. We mean business—don't bat an eye—any of you or we'll blow your heads off—we want Urschel. Which man is Urschel?"

No one answered.

Berenice Urschel, who had just made an original demand bid of two hearts, felt her spirits fall from the exhilaration of a possible grand-slam to the horrible realization of the immediate probability

## A DEMAND BID

of her husband being kidnapped. She sat immobile. Her composure in that tense moment was an apocalypse of the matchless courage and generalship which for two hundred subsequent tumultuous hours controlled the actions of an army of men.

"We'll take you both," said the machine gunman.

Urschel and Jarrett stood up. Urschel's impulse was to resist. A fleeting glance at his wife changed his mind. In that instantaneous interchange of telepathic thought, Urschel read his wife's mind as clearly as if she had shouted to him, "Go with them, Charles. It's suicide to resist. Keep your head. Trust me. I'll turn heaven and earth to repossess you. Nothing can stop me."

Urschel and Jarrett left the porch with the six-shooter bandit covering them. The machine gunner turned to Mrs. Urschel.

"Don't move until you hear a car start out in the driveway. If you reach for that telephone before then, I'll blow your brains out."

The machine gunner faded into the darkness. A motor started.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"Hurry," whispered Berenice Urschel to Mrs. Jarrett. "Fly upstairs."

Locking the doors at the head of the stairs, Mrs. Urschel was but thirty seconds in reaching Chief Watts, of the Oklahoma City Police Department, by telephone. Within four minutes she was talking to J. Edgar Hoover, Chief of the Division of Investigation of the Department of Justice, in Washington. In seventeen minutes Ralph Colvin, in charge of the Oklahoma City office of the Department of Justice, together with Chief Watts and Sheriff Stanley Rogers, was on the scene.

In one hour and forty minutes Walter Jarrett came rushing back into the house from which he had been kidnapped. He had been ejected from the bandit car nine miles east of Oklahoma City, with emphatic instructions not to talk. He had caught a ride into town.

Newspapers throughout the world carried inch deep headlines of that bold abduction. Urschel was reputed to be enormously wealthy, having recently united his own fortune with another by marrying the widow of the late Tom B. Slick, the most picturesque and dazzling



## A DEMAND BID

wildcatter ever known to the oil business. Slick's will left as Trustees and Executors of his estate, his widow, Berenice Slick, his brother-in-law, Charles F. Urschel, whose wife died in less than a year, and another brother-in-law, Arthur A. Seeligion, of San Antonio, Texas.

Not the slightest clue was available. There seemed no tangible starting point for the officers to begin work. True a threatening letter had been received, but that was several months earlier and its nature could in no way be construed as having any connection with this deed.

Newspaper men, motion picture squads, officers, friends and curious thousands crowded the lawn and streets surrounding the Urschel home. The Federal authorities took charge. Sheriff Rogers and Chief Watts rendered faultless cooperation from start to finish. Two days passed during which hundreds of fake telephone calls and crank letters came. Each telephone call was heard by three persons, including an agent of the Department of Justice. In the anxiety of the first two days many of the fake telephone calls sounded to the distracted family like genuine contacts.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Chisellers, cheaters and high-jackers were seeking to cash in on the known harassed state of mind of the Urschel family. Some actually succeeded, holding up various members of the family at the point of the gun. In one instance demanding one thousand dollars.

### CHAPTER III

## THE GODS OF DESTINY

On Tuesday, July 23, 1933, the Gods of Destiny and J. Edgar Hoover made the move that, eventually, helped solve the Urschel Kidnapping case. Four government officers and the convict, Frank Nash, had been massacred at the Kansas City Union Station at daybreak the morning of June 17, 1933. A Federal Agent also had fallen in the fight. Gus Jones, crack Ace of the Department then in charge of the San Antonio office, had been assigned to solve the Kansas City massacre. He was making phenomenal progress on the case, but the Urschel kidnapping was the most explosive bomb that had yet been thrown by gangsters into an American home, and eclipsed in drama and public interest, anything that had occurred since Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr., had been kidnapped and murdered. It also was the most brazen and direct challenge to law enforcement in the annals of the Department of Justice. J. Edgar Hoover made an instantaneous and

## CRIMES' PARADISE

characteristic decision. He took his greatest Ace, Gus Jones, from the Kansas City massacre investigation and shot him to Oklahoma City to unravel the mystery of that unprecedented case.

Special Agent, Gus Jones, a native Texan, a former Ranger, and the canniest criminal catcher that ever possessed a freckled smile, arrived in Oklahoma City by airplane at 2:00 p. m., on July 23, 1933. From the moment he walked into the Urschel home the tidal wave of destiny for the kidnappers began to roll. Within thirty minutes he had the complete confidence and cooperation of Mrs. Urschel and her associates.

To anyone never directly involved in a kidnapping, the situation is utterly inconceivable. Suppose your child was, tonight, snatched from its home by machine-gun bandits, or your wife, husband, sister, brother or sweetheart. Out into the blackness of the night goes the loved one. No goodbye—nothing. Ruffians have invaded your home. You sit, helplessly awaiting their pleasure, or you become frantic. You hope they will make a demand, payable in cash, providing that in case you com-

## THE GODS OF DESTINY

ply with their minutest instructions and pay when and where they dictate, they will release your loved one unharmed—maybe. That “maybe” is the worm that eats hour after hour at the hearts of the family of the kidnapped victim.

Imagine America, the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave, where today, every family of more than moderate means would be confronting this nightly menace, but for the unflinching courage of Charles Urschel and his cohorts. The fearless stand of the Urschel Clan in the face of daily threats of violence and death was the turning point in America of the racketeering game. The hundreds of bandits, gangsters, kidnappers and desperadoes who have been killed, captured or driven to suicide since Urschel's absolute intrepidity, unmindful of impending evil, broke the strangle-hold of gangdom, stand as an intangible, but enduring monument to his valiant leadership.

On Sunday morning in the Urschel home, after the sensational midnight abduction, plans swiftly molded. Ralph Colvin, head of the Bureau of Investigation in Oklahoma City, was in charge.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Berenice Urschel, silent, beautiful, grief-torn, sat in the conferences, her face immobile—except for an occasional flicker of the long eyelashes—her ears attuned to every helpful suggestion of the Federal Agent, her intelligence correctly interpreting each move. Her marvelous mental poise in the face of such a devastating catastrophe, took from Colvin and his associates one great worry, that of having to deal with hysteria.

The Bureau of Investigation makes few mistakes. Its men are impeccably trained; the requirements are high. In addition to other qualifications one must be a graduate lawyer or a graduate accountant, in order to be admitted to the service. These men rarely adduce evidence that tricky attorneys can cause a trial Judge to throw out.

Colvin's first instructions were that as few persons as possible be acquainted with any single fact, detail or development. His orders were polite but positive. Friends, relatives—except those designated by Berenice Urschel and himself—should have not the slightest information of



## THE GODS OF DESTINY

happenings, mail communications, telegrams or telephone conversations.

Suppose the voice that came over the telephone was that of one of the kidnapers. "Meet me at 29th and High Streets. Have Fifty Thousand Dollars in cash. I'll deliver Urschel's watch to show good faith. Bring no one with you." Or, "Meet me one mile west of the bridge on West 10th Street. Bring One Hundred Thousand Dollars. Don't try any subterfuge. Bring no one with you."

"Fakers, chisellers," said the Federals. "But we have to try out every clue."

The following letter mailed at Venus, Texas, July 25th, 1933, is a sample—

"Note you are the go between for the family of Chas. F. Urschel if so I can tell you where they are holding him. I will reveal the facts to you if you wish me to are either reveal them to the Dective dept—but I would sujest you in as much as I thank you should no & then you could tell whom you wished. if you want This informashion signify same by run add in dallas Times herld & Ft worth star teligram 6-27 & 6-28 in clasfied dept run add in a small

## CRIMES' PARADISE

circle as Follows

Notify	Notify Dect 3/4
E.E.K I do	Dpt
111	1111

Mr. F. Urschel is fairing well but don't sleep much a trifel nervous locashion of myself will be revealed in next notice after I see your deceshion in news Paper. Mr. Urschel release can be secured at small cost & without BLOOD-SHED if you will follow my instructions MAP ect I will enclose to you at once after I see your add

Fore 3 times only."

One letter came from Kansas City, stating that Mr. Urschel would be returned unharmed if instructions of the gang were followed in detail. The letter demanded that Mrs. Urschel come to Kansas City, visit numerous drug stores, making a purchase in each, and using a taxicab to go from one to the other. On the second day she was to go over the same route, but use streetcars. At a certain point on the second day she was to drop a bag containing Fifty Thousand Dollars. If she complied with the instructions her husband would be released within twelve hours, otherwise he would be



JUDGE EDGAR S. VAUGHT.



THE FEDERAL BUILDING  
IN OKLAHOMA CITY.

## THE GODS OF DESTINY

killed. The route designated for her to take through Kansas City's business district covered more than five miles. The Federals immediately branded the letter as an attempt by outsiders to chisel in.

The chisellers usually demanded that Mrs. Urschel talk with them.

"I can't drive a car. May I bring Seeligson or my brother or father with me?" plaintively Mrs. Urschel would ask.

"Yes, but no one else, and they are not to be armed."

For the first two days these fakers kept the Urschel home in seething excitement. Scores of newspaper correspondents and motion picture representatives had established a veritable camp across 18th Street. Any move to meet the real abductors might be frustrated by the alert newshawks following. To avoid this possibility, Berenice Urschel, on the occasions of the contacts with alleged kidnappers, surreptitiously crept along a vine-clad lattice structure, climbed through a window into the garage, and placed herself prone on the floor of the big family Packard. Whoever accompanied her on the exciting mission drove the car nonchalant-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

ly through the lane of newspaper reporters and cameramen, waving a greeting and voicing an explanatory—"Going to the office, be back shortly."

Be it here said to the undying glory of the entire army of brilliant newspaper men, who thoroughly covered the Urschel case (and it is conceded that the case was ably covered), that the demeanor of each individual reporter or correspondent, was such that the sorely-pressed and nerve-torn members of the Urschel clique, always felt that any newspaper man out there in front would forego a scoop, or even risk his life, to assist in a successful solution of the horrible episode.

What a galaxy of able writers there were! Noel Houston and Lee Hills, of the Scripps-Howard papers. Jack Stinnett of the Daily Oklahoman. Walter Harrison and Dick Pearce of the Oklahoma City Times. Walter Biscup of the Tulsa World. Voight and Durst of the Associated Press. Sir Percival Phillips of the London Daily Mail. Kilgallen of New York, Hearst's celebrated Crime reporter. John Evans of the Fort Worth Star Telegram, and others too numerous to mention. How I

## THE GODS OF DESTINY

wish I could substitute here for my faltering journalistic form their daily accounts of the rapidly moving drama. I have before me two immense scrap books given me by Charles and Berenice Urschel, compiled under their direction, containing every newspaper headline, photograph, and account from the sensational machine-gun hold-up at midnight, July 22, to this date. At the risk of being convicted of plagiarizing, I crave to lift bodily from those stirring newspaper columns, whole paragraphs of gripping drama phrased in rapid fire, irreproachable English, thrilling and understandable alike to the street sweeper, and the college president.



## CHAPTER IV

### ONE GRAND

On Tuesday, July 24th, one bunch of chiselers succeeded in hi-jacking the Urschel family out of One Thousand Dollars. Several contacts had been made, but thus far personal harm or loss had been avoided. On this occasion the appointment was made over the telephone by which Fifty Thousand Dollars should be delivered at an appointed place. The voice calling refused to deal with anyone except Berenice Urschel. Three ears, however, were attuned to extension 'phones.

"Do you want your husband back?" asked a husky voice.

"Of course, I do," said Mrs. Urschel.

"Then follow these instructions. Bring Fifty Thousand Dollars to a place one mile west of the bridge on West 10th Street, and I will give you Urschel's watch showing good faith. On delivery of another Fifty Thousand Dollars, I will release Urschel."

Mrs. Urschel and Arthur Seeligson

## ONE GRAND

drove to the appointed place at the stated time.

"Have you the money?" asked a heavy-set swarthy man who drove up beside them.

Seeligson explained that the time lock at the bank had not yet opened.

"Have you the watch?" asked Seeligson.

"No, but meet me here at two o'clock with Five Thousand Dollars, to show good faith, and I'll have the watch," said the bandit.

At two o'clock Seeligson and Mrs. Urschel met the bandit. Seeligson had enclosed One Thousand Dollars in an envelope, together with a lot of blank paper. Berenice Urschel carried another Four Thousand Dollars concealed in her hat. The bandit asked—

"Have you the money?"

"Yes," said Seeligson, "have you the watch?"

A gun was thrust into Mrs. Urschel's face with the command that the money be delivered pronto. Seeligson handed over the envelope containing One Thousand Dollars.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Late that night a woman's voice over the telephone insultingly cursed Mrs. Urschel for being a double-crosser and not delivering the Five Thousand Dollars.

Every moment, day and night, was filled with exciting telephone calls or contacts. Some of these contacts were with desperate characters. Included in the persons we had to meet and talk to were seventeen convicts or ex-convicts, escaped, pardoned or parolled. Our meetings with them would have to be hedged with the greatest secrecy. At one time a man giving the name of Jack Johnson, demanded that Mrs. Urschel meet him at 29th and High Streets, Oklahoma City, and he would tell her where her husband was being held captive. Mrs. Urschel unhesitatingly drove to the designated spot in the outskirts of the Oklahoma City oil field. The man, a tough looking customer, told a weird tale. He said that two men picked him up the previous night and drove him to a lonely ranch house in the Kiamichi Mountain region, 150 miles away. There, he claimed, he saw Mr. Urschel imprisoned in one of the rooms. He said Urschel was apparently in good

## ONE GRAND

health, but was nervous and refused to eat. He told Mrs. Urschel that the two men instructed him to come back and communicate with her, and to bring either her or a representative of her family to the ranch house the next night to negotiate terms for Urschel's release.

This was finally checked down to a brazen attempt to kidnap a second member of the Urschel family, but the culprits had no connection with the original abductors.

Gus Jones said, "This has all the earmarks of a real kidnapping job, and in my opinion Mr. Urschel is in the hands of a sinister bunch of professional criminals. When the real contact comes there will be no doubt as to its authenticity." His deductions afterward proved to be faultless.

Clues flowed in from everywhere. None was convincingly genuine. Hope in the Urschel household by Monday had turned to apprehension; by Tuesday, to paralyzing fear. The telephone rang incessantly day and night. Startling information, if it could be believed, was being conveyed almost hourly. The Federals shook their heads. They gave solemn

## CRIMES' PARADISE

promises to make no move that would retard or interfere with Urschel's return. They requested only that nothing be kept from them, and that the moment Urschel was safely back in his home, they have the fullest cooperation. How sacredly they kept their pledges and how efficiently they did their work, can be testified to, mutely, by the number of kidnappers now looking through iron bars.

On Monday evening, it was announced that all officers had been withdrawn from the Urschel home. The truth of the matter is that a Federal man was in the home every moment, day and night.

Many noted authorities differ with me in my assertion that Urschel, by his fearlessness and leadership, established a stop-look-listen sign for kidnapers.

Walter Biscup of the Tulsa World, in the issue of Februry 4, 1934, expressed his views in the following language:

"The 'Voice' of the kidnaping racket will demand and extort more than \$2,000,000 from terrified victims this year!

"This prophecy is not exaggerated in the opinion of criminologists, who be-

## ONE GRAND

lieve that during 1934 a wave of 'snatching' will sweep over the United States despite the effective work now being done by the Department of Justice.

"The underworld never has had the intelligence to profit by the mistake of fellow criminals. It does not take into consideration the law of averages, which, often as the law of mankind, makes gory failures of criminal endeavors. This explains in a measure why two recruits step into the ranks of crime every time one is removed.

"Consider the two or three thousand killers from bootleg mobs who find themselves without means of an easy income since the illicit liquor industry has been virtually dried up. Here is a deadly and mobile army of assassins who survived the indiscriminate warfare between the mobs. This blood-stained aggregation remains from the ranks of metropolitan 'trigger' men and 'torpedoes.'

"Certainly no honest profession will absorb this crew. Its members have been trained in the rackets. Chicanery is second nature to them. They consider themselves 'wise guys' and cunning enough to escape the traps which have caught their less fortunate accomplices. Add to that an ego that has



## CRIMES' PARADISE

been whetted by easy money and political protection and you have a confirmed racketeer.

"Racketeers tell you that once in the rackets they have no escape. In truth they have no desire to cast off the embrace of lawlessness. They are turning to kidnaping because it is the only major racket left—the one that can still pay big dividends.

"The twelve major kidnappings in the United States last year brought the 'snatchers' a total of \$707,000. Of the participants in these kidnappings forty-three were arrested and convicted while two were lynched. Six kidnapers who have been fugitives and are not yet apprehended pocketed ransoms amounting to \$120,000.

"These statistics are obtained from court records, yet they furnish less than one hundredth part of the real kidnaping figures of the year. Various police departments in the United States were notified of approximately seven hundred kidnappings during 1933. The national council of crime reports three thousand kidnappings during the same period!

"The number seems unbelieving—but true. For every kidnaper caught and placed in prison, scores are roam-

## ONE GRAND

ing the nation appraising prospective victims and ready to dart in for the snatch.

"When you consider these figures it is easier to understand why the underworld considers kidnaping a lucrative proposition and is not discouraged in its first year of active effort toward this field of major crime.

"There is no discounting the department of justice's efficacy in supressing a portion of this predatory type of crime. It has the necessary organization to combat kidnapers.

"Work on extortion cases has proved to be the most difficult in the annals of crime detection. Usually an anonymous note is the only starting clue the officers have. However, the prosecution record is above the average and encouraging.

"One kidnaper was convicted and received a twenty-five year prison sentence in the Haskell Bohn kidnaping. Three persons received forty-eight year terms in the George Davis kidnaping. Two men received forty-two year terms in the Charles Boettcher case. One was given a twenty-five year term in the Peggy McMath case.

"Three were convicted in the Mary McElroy case, one receiving a death

## CRIMES' PARADISE

sentence, one a life sentence and one an eight-year term. The eight kidnapers in the William Hamm, John Factor and John O'Connell cases were acquitted for some undetermined reason.

"Seven were convicted in the August Luer case, three of whom received life sentences, three terms of thirty years each and one lesser accomplice a three months' term. Two received twenty-nine year terms in the John K. Ottley case. Three received fifteen year terms for the John Lyle kidnaping, while six received a total of one hundred and fifty-two years' imprisonment in the Claude Boyd case.

"The Charles F. Urschel case at Oklahoma City last summer found fifteen principals and accomplices being convicted, six of whom received life sentences.

"In the Brooke Hart case at San Diego the two confessed kidnapers were never tried. An aroused mob stormed the jail and lynched the two, later receiving the unofficial approval of the California Governor for the two hangings. The end apparently justified the means.

"Here is what the important victims in recent kidnapings were worth, in so far as cash payments were concerned:

## ONE GRAND

"Charles F. Urschel, \$200,000; the Lindbergh baby, \$50,000; Charles Rosenthal, \$50,000; Howard Woolverton, \$20,000; Haskel Bohn, \$12,000; Charles Boettcher, \$60,000; Mary McElroy, \$30,000.

"William Hamm, Jr., \$75,000; Jerome Factor, \$50,000; his father, John (Jake the Barber) Factor, \$50,000; August Luer, \$10,000; John J. O'Connell, Jr., \$40,000.

"It's become such an important business that Lloyd's of London is now carrying kidnaping insurance, it is understood. It costs \$750.00 a year for a \$100,000 maximum kidnaping policy. The maximum policy for a minor is \$50,000. Considerable secrecy surrounds the issuance of these policies.

"The insured is known by a secret serial number to the company and at no time is his name divulged to employees. Every effort is made to conceal this information from the public as well as gangsters. It is understood that the contract of these policies is automatically breached when the insured gives out information that he is carrying such a policy.

"Little of the inside workings of a kidnap gang is known to the general public.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"It takes an organization, schooled in every branch of crime and human trickery, to successfully operate the 'snatch.'

"This explanation is based on a hypothetical case:

"The 'peddler' steps into the picture. By various means he learns that John Doe, local magnate, has an available bank balance of \$100,000, that he is beloved by family and associates who who would not hesitate to pay this sum for his safety.

"Using his connections the 'peddler' sells or 'peddles' this information to the mob. His price depends upon his salesmanship. He then steps entirely out of the picture.

"The 'finger' then comes in. His work with the mob consists of learning every possible detail of the private life of the proposed victim, paying particular attention to his schedule in arriving home and leaving for his office. The time for the kidnaping is then set.

"The 'muscle men' then do the actual 'snatching' or kidnaping. Armed and insolent they physically remove the victim, bundle him in a car and drive to a pre-arranged hideout. The 'squawk', appropriately named, is the next move. This comes four or five days after the

## ONE GRAND

kidnaping and has given the harassed family ample enough time to become terrified and distracted over the victim's safety or possible fate. The 'squawk' is the written message by the victim pleading that whatever ransom asked be paid.

"Next comes the most important move in the plot. The 'voice' speaks. He generally furnishes the mob with whatever brains it can claim. His task is to actually make contact with the family, select intermediaries, prevent tip-offs to police and doublecross from the family.

"Upon his cunning and adroit maneuvering the entire success of the plot depends. The slightest mistake and capture looms up. The 'pay off' comes when the intermediary pays the ransom. The 'cool off' is usually the 24-hour period which the mob takes before releasing the victim a few miles from his home. Then comes the 'dump' which literally means that the mob dumps the blindfolded victim from a car and drives off. The 'scatter' is the final act concerning the mob when its members separate immediately."



## CHAPTER V

### THE CONTACT COMES

On Wednesday morning, July 26th, John G. Catlett, Tulsa oil man and a close personal friend of the Urschel family, was shaving in his home, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. A Western Union messenger boy delivered a large envelope addressed to him. Catlett casually opened the envelope, glancing at its contents as he continued shaving. Suddenly a name riveted his undivided attention. Three cards, bearing Urschel's name and signature, disentangled themselves from the papers. Catlett was instantly tense as a panther. He snatched up the papers and found three letters, probably the most interesting and dramatic papers he had ever taken from an envelope. One letter, in Urschel's handwriting, was addressed to Catlett. Another written by Urschel was addressed to Berenice Urschel, the third to Kirkpatrick. Catlett hastily scanned the letter addressed to himself, which read as follows:

"Dear John:

You undoubtedly know about my

EXTERIOR VIEW OF ARMON SHANNON'S SHACK NEAR PARADISE, TEXAS, WHERE URSCHEL WAS HELD CAPTIVE NINE DAYS.



THE ROOM IN ARMON SHANNON'S SHACK WHERE URSCHEL WAS HELD.

BARN - shed on Creek  
where A.C. & Hogs -  
3 Pigs - Three or Four  
Milk Cows with calves.

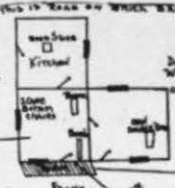
-N-

Here where Madeline  
Lived - who was shot  
the head of legs -  
somewhat in front of  
Shack - Here a Bull  
Killed Unknown -

Well  
Pump & Bucket  
Water Manual Pump  
Pump next to main  
distance between  
has metal pipes -

W -  
Beds  
House has ceiling  
floor boards that  
east to west.

Small Crea Field  
Totally Barren



Directional Cards and Reminders  
Would point to a house not  
over 1 mile away

-E-

Red and Unknown - No Sample  
at Road end with holes in

A large distance between  
the house and the road  
the road is not straight

East 1/2 mile to the  
house - light  
house is not  
seen from the  
road -

MAP OF HOUSE.

Believed to be Country Road - As Cars were heard occasionally -  
Possibly dirt road as heard cars stuck on Sunday 11/30/35  
7.6-2-7  
- Gus T Jones -

ON THE FARM OF CASS COLEMAN, NEAR COLEMAN, TEXAS, WHERE \$73,250.00 OF THE URSCHEL MONEY WAS UNEARTHED. IT HAD BEEN BURIED IN A THERMOS JUG AND AN OLD MOLASSES CAN FOUR FEET IN A COTTON PATCH.



## THE CONTACT COMES

predicament. If Arthur (Seeligson) has returned, please deliver the enclosed letter to him, otherwise to Kirkpatrick. Deliver in person and do not communicate by telephone. Tell no one else about this letter, not even your wife, and when you deliver it do not go to residence. Authorities must be kept off the case or release impossible and they cannot effect rescue. For my sake follow these instructions to the letter and do not discuss with anyone other than those mentioned. This is my final letter to any of my friends or family and if this contact is not successful I fear for my life. When in Oklahoma City keep out of sight as much as possible because you will probably be used later on in this capacity. I am putting all my dependence in you regarding this matter and feel sure you will take every precaution possible.

Best regards as ever,

Your friend,

C. F. URSCHER.

"When later contact is made party will have my identification card. Please give enclosed letter for Berenice, to Arthur or Kirk."

Within ten minutes Catlett was on his way to Oklahoma City. When he reached

## CRIMES' PARADISE

his destination he made a secret rendezvous with Arthur Seeligson. Seeligson discerned instantly that the genuine contact had come. Urschel's handwriting, his identification cards, his personal note to his wife were irrefutable proof that at last the gangsters who had surreptitiously snatched him from his home at the muzzle of a machine gun, were ready to trade.

The unsigned typewritten letter to Kirkpatrick, was a gem in its construction and lethal in its import. It read as follows:

"E. E. Kirkpatrick,  
Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma.  
Sir:

The enclosed letter from Charles F. Urschel to you and the enclosed identification cards will convince you that you are dealing with the abductors.

Immediately upon receipt of this letter you will proceed to obtain the sum of TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$200,000.00) in GENUINE USED FEDERAL RESERVE CURRENCY in the denominations of TWENTY DOLLAR (\$20.00) bills.

It will be useless for you to attempt taking notes of SERIAL NUMBERS

## THE CONTACT COMES

MAKING UP DUMMY PACKAGE, OR ANYTHING ELSE IN THE LINE OF ATTEMPTED DOUBLE CROSS, BEAR THIS IN MIND, CHARLES F. URSCHER, WILL REMAIN IN OUR CUSTODY UNTIL MONEY HAS BEEN INSPECTED AND EXCHANGED, AND FURTHERMORE WILL BE AT THE SCENE OF CONTACT FOR PAY-OFF AND IF THERE SHOULD BE ANY ATTEMPT AT DOUBLE XX IT WILL BE HE THAT SUFFERS THE CONSEQUENCE.

As soon as you have read and RE-READ this carefully and wish to commence negotiations, you will proceed to the DAILY OKLAHOMAN and insert the following BLIND AD under the REAL ESTATE, FARMS FOR SALE, and we will know that you are ready for BUSINESS, and you will receive further instructions AT THE BOX ASSIGNED TO YOU BY NEWSPAPER, **AND NO WHERE ELSE SO BE CERTAIN THAT THIS ARRANGEMENT IS KEPT SECRET** AS THIS IS OUR FINAL ATTEMPT TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU, on account of our former instructions to JARRETT being DISREGARDED and the LAW being notified, so we have neither the time or patience to carry on any further

## CRIMES' PARADISE

lengthy correspondence.

RUN THIS AD FOR ONE WEEK IN  
DAILY OKLAHOMAN.

FOR SALE—160 acres land, good five room house, deep well. Also cows, Tools, tractors, Corn and Hay. \$3750.00 for quick sale. TERMS—BOX No.....

You will hear from us as soon as convenient after insertion of AD."

Seeligson and Catlett knew that the utmost secrecy must prevail. Charles Urschel's life hung in the balance and these two trusted friends could be depended upon to make no misstep.

It was decided that Catlett should insert the ad. When he had accomplished the task and was assigned Box No. 807, he drove silently back to Tulsa, and Arthur Seeligson alone knew of his visit.

Berenice Urschel was deeply moved when she read the letter from her husband. It was good to know that he was still alive, but there was a hopelessness behind the attempted nonchalance of his brief sentences which breathed a horror that could only be surmised, and the chilling

## THE CONTACT COMES

sting of threatened death bristled from every line of the bandits' letter. Any slight gleam of hope engendered had a sardonic tinge.

Friday morning a letter reached Box No. 807 of the Daily Oklahoman. Arthur Seeligson immediately opened it. The letter was air-mailed and post-marked at Joplin, Missouri. It read—

"Mr. E. E. Kirkpatrick,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Sir:

In view of the fact that you have had the Ad inserted as per our instructions, we gather that you are now prepared to meet our ultimatum.

You will pack TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$200,000.00) in USED GENUINE FEDERAL RESERVE NOTES OF TWENTY DOLLARS DENOMINATION in a suitable light-colored leather bag, and have someone purchase transportation for you, including berth, aboard Train No. 28 (The Sooner) which departs at 10:10 P. M., via the M. K. & T. lines for Kansas City, Missouri.

You will ride on the observation platform where you will be observed by someone at some station along the line



## CRIMES' PARADISE

between Oklahoma City and Kansas City, Missouri. If indications are alright, somewhere along the right-of-way you will observe a fire on the right side of Track (facing direction train is bound). That first fire will be your cue to be prepared to throw bag to track immediately after passing second fire.

Mr. Urschel will, upon instructions, attend to the fires and secure the bag when you throw it off, he will open it and transfer the contents to a sack that he will be provided with, so, if you comply with our demand and do not attempt any subterfuge, as according to the News reports you have pledged, Mr. Urschel should be home in a very short while.

REMEMBER THIS, IF ANY TRICKERY IS ATTEMPTED YOU WILL FIND THE REMAINS OF URSCHER AND INSTEAD OF JOY THERE WILL BE DOUBLE GRIEF—FOR, SOMEONE, VERY NEAR AND DEAR TO THE URSCHER FAMILY IS UNDER CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE AND WILL, LIKEWISE SUFFER FOR YOUR ERROR.

If there is the slightest hitch in these plans for any reason whatsoever, not your fault, you will proceed on into Kansas City, Missouri, and register at

## THE CONTACT COMES

the Muehlebach Hotel, under the name of E. E. Kincaid of Little Rock, Arkansas, and await further instructions there, however, there should not be, IF YOU COMPLY WITH THESE SIMPLE DIRECTIONS.

THE MAIN THING IS: DO NOT DIVULGE THE CONTENTS OF THIS LETTER TO ANY LAW AUTHORITIES FOR WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF FURTHER COMMUNICATION. YOU ARE TO MAKE THIS TRIP SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1933. BE SURE THAT YOU RIDE THE PLATFORM OF THE REAR CAR AND HAVE BAG WITH MONEY IN IT FROM THE TIME YOU LEAVE OKLAHOMA CITY."

T W O HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS! A staggering sum for any person or estate to pay in cash on twenty-four hours' notice. Yet in their letter the kidnappers had said "This is our final attempt to communicate with you. We have neither the time or patience to carry on any lengthy correspondence."

T W O HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS CASH. Urschel's life. Urschel had said in the pathetic personal note he

## CRIMES' PARADISE

was permitted to write to his wife, "If the demand is too great, just forget it, it will be O.K. with me." He was in dead earnest when he wrote that. Knowing him as I do, that laconic line took the heart out of me. If the ransom demanded for his freedom and his life would embarrass the estate, he would willingly make the sacrifice.

*Urschel did not ask or know for almost one week after his return at what price he had been ransomed.*

There was never one word of discussion about the amount of the ransom. When Berenice Urschel read the letter demanding a king's fortune, for the return of her husband, she and Arthur Seeligson immediately began the task of getting the cash ready and Seeligson saw to it that the serial number of every bill was correctly tabulated.

Seeligson in his press conference that day, not only deplored the fact that no contact had been had with the abductors, but he made a "Psychic Bid," to use bridge parlance, and requested that the newspaper men all withdraw from the vicinity of the Urschel home in order to give the

## THE CONTACT COMES

kidnappers an opportunity to make a contact. Seeligson realized that the vital thing was absolute secrecy. There was a chance now that if the cards were not gummed up, if no mistake was made, Urschel's life might be saved. If the newspapers got the slightest inkling of the proposed pay-off there was no forecasting what might happen. Any interference, one error, and Urschel's life was forfeit.

The newspapermen unanimously agreed. They even offered their broadcasting facilities to the Urschel family in order to establish a contact.

Plots thickened. Fakers and cheaters wired, 'phoned, wrote and appeared in person, all claiming for a stated sum they would deliver the kidnapped man. The Urschel organization smoked-screened the true situation by showing the liveliest interest in each and every contact. It would be unwise now to display any lack of intensity in the search for contacts.

After it was certain that we were dealing with the real kidnappers, what a temptation it was to shoot every chiseler on the spot and let him lie where he had *lied*. But even after the ransom money

## CRIMES' PARADISE

had been paid, these lecherous frauds were still treated civilly because we dared make no offensive move until Urschel was safe.

## CHAPER VI.

### THE ONE WAY RIDE.

At 8:00 o'clock on Saturday night, July 29th, six men squatted in the shubbery in the back lawn of the Urschel home. They were Arthur and Lamar Seeligson, J. A. Frates (father of Berenice Urschel), Clifford Frates (her youngest brother), Deputy Sheriff, Don Stone, and the writer. All were armed with sawed-off shot guns, except Stone, who carried a machine gun. A car came noiselessly up the driveway. A flood light manipulated by Berenice Urschel, from upstairs, flashed for one instant, then left all in deep darkness. During that brief flash could be seen Lyall Barnhart, Comptroller of the First National Bank of Oklahoma City, and a companion seated in the car. Arthur Seeligson walked rapidly in the darkness to the automobile. He was given a Gladstone bag, with which he quickly disappeared into the house. This Gladstone bag contained - - TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS!

At 10:00 o'clock that night, John Cat-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

lett stepped from a shadow near the railway station and joined me as I boarded the "Sooner" Katy-Limited due to depart for Kansas City at 10:10 o'clock. We had lowers five and six. In the dark-colored suitcase I carried TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS. In a light-colored grip of similar size was an equal weight of magazines and newspapers. We had boarded a pullman with observation car. To our consternation we learned from the porter that two extra pullmans, carrying World Fair excursionists, were being switched to the rear of our pullman. The train started. There was nothing to do but go to the rear with our grips and occupy the vestibule instead of observation accommodations.

The train got under way. A brakeman came out where we were standing. We told him we wanted to do a little sociable drinking, and did not want to be disturbed. The long ride began. Catlett and I would sit together on camp stools until the train approached a town, then he would step inside the coach and I would stand up under the small incandescent car light, smoking a cigarette each time, so as



## THE ONE WAY RIDE

to be plainly discernable to any of our nocturnal shadows who might be checking up on us from the wayside.

If the flares appeared, we intended to throw out the bag containing the TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS. If, by chance, some outsider had gained information concerning the pay-off, and made an attempt to high-jack us, we would give him the grip with a lot of good reading matter in it.

Towns slipped by with monotonous regularity. Witcher, Arcadia, Luther, Fallis, Carney, Tryon, where Tom Slick had drilled his first well, in the beginning of his spectacular career in the oil world; Cushing, the greatest oil field among the many discovered by that redoubtable wildcatter.

The speeding train roared over the Cimarron River. We were now traversing territory once the playground of such notorious outlaws as Jesse James, the Dalton boys and Al Spencer. In previous years they had held up the Katy train along this very route. Train robbery was a highly respectable calling in those days, and its devotees gentlemanly miscreants

## CRIMES' PARADISE

compared with the present day snatch racket and its hoodlum sponsors.

The burial grounds of old-time Indian war chiefs lay scattered for miles to the right and left. Those old aborigines had, in decades long past, lighted countless signal fires from the peaks, now dimly discernible in the distance. How welcome at this moment would be the flame of a signal fire!

The minutes dragged into hours. The receding western sky was brilliantly studded with stars. Dim lights glistened in lonely farm houses, but no flares appeared.

Catlett discussed hunting, the most attractive bait to use in fly fishing in the streams of the Ozarks, the best methods of stalking wild turkeys. For all I could discern, he was as unconcerned about the perils of the immediate task in hand as if he were on an ordinary business trip. Yet I knew he was ready for any emergency. I knew that he was a deadly shot and would give no single thought to his personal safety. We agreed that the most probable place for the flares would be in the outlaw country of the Osage Hills.

## THE ONE WAY RIDE

But mile after mile stretched away under the iron wheels of the dust-swept vestibule, with nothing to indicate that the kidnappers intended to play fair.

Bartlesville, Dewey, Coffeyville and Parsons. The faint gleam in the east apprized us of approaching daybreak.

Dawn came. Sunrise. The rhythmic click of the wheels on rail sang a song of sardonic glee. Sang a funeral dirge to Catlett and me. After all, the gangsters had pulled a nerve racking hoax on us. If they had deceived in this instance, would they not lie again? If we finally delivered the money to them, would they free Urschel or double-cross us again? Might they not hold one of us for ransom, since their first demands had been met so readily? Nothing to do but play the diabolical game to the bitter end.

Throughout the long night and the passing of fifty-one stations, Catlett and I kept our fruitless vigil. Fifty-one times I stood leaning out the rear opening of the vestibule lighting a cigarette, each time hoping against hope for the denouement of the fantastic arrangement.

Upon arriving at Kansas City, we regis-

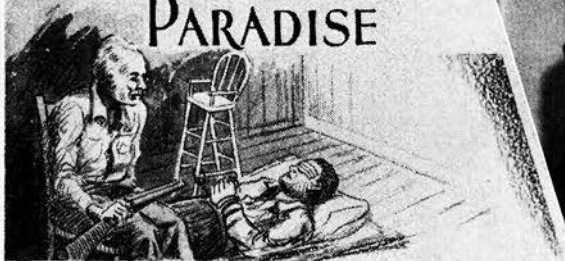
## CRIMES' PARADISE

tered at the Muehlebach Hotel, as directed. At 10:00 o'clock came a Postal telegram sent from Tulsa, Oklahoma, addressed to E. E. Kincaid. It read—

“Unavoidable incident kept me from seeing you last night. Will communicate about 6:00 o'clock.

(Signed) E. W. MOORE”

# CRIMES' PARADISE

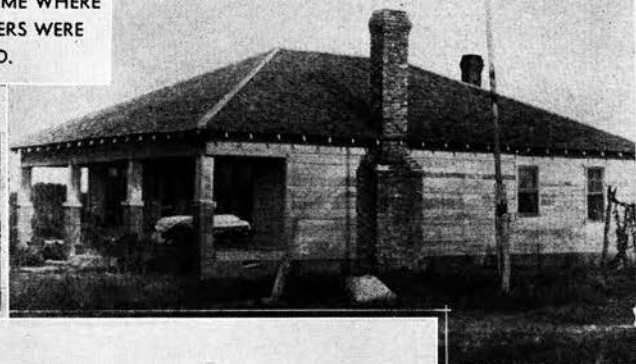


R.G. "BOSS"  
SHANNON



"BOSS" SHANNON, CENTER,  
HIS WIFE ORA AND HIS  
SON ARMON.

THE SHANNON HOME WHERE  
BAILEY AND OTHERS WERE  
CAPTURED.



OUTSIDE VIEW OF  
ARMON SHANNON'S  
SHACK.



## CHAPTER VII

### OLD MASTERS AND NEW

There are days in one's life that seem longer than years.

Sunday, July 30, 1933, will linger in my memory as an unforgettable nightmare. The taunting certainty of a friend's life in my hands. The haunting uncertainty of the long wait. Had failure to comply strictly with the instructions by carrying two suitcases instead of one, constituted a fatal error? Had I blundered in bringing Catlett with me instead of presenting myself as a single emissary?

If the hours were long to us, what torture must they be giving Berenice Urschel and our helpers back in the big silent house on 18th Street? We, at least, were on the front line where the first happening would break our suspense. Berenice Urschel, most deeply interested of all persons in the world, torn by sleepless days and nights of vigil and forlorn hope, haunted by fears she dare not hint, what must be her emotion? I had felt confident I would be able by this time to report

## CRIMES' PARADISE

successful completion of the pay-off.

The hours dragged. From somewhere in the hotel across the area-way floated the soft exquisite tones of a piano under the magic touch of an artist. Whether that artist was man or woman, I do not know, but to this day I should like to meet the person who played those symphonies. Hour after hour the music came—no jazz, no ragtime—just melodies of the old masters:—Mendelsshon's "Spring Song," Rubenstein's "Melody in 'F'", Schumann's "Warun," Liszt's "Liebestraum," Schubert's "Serenade."

There has always been to me something more inspiring in such melodies than the glow of red wine. As I listened, the monstrous incongruity of the situation came to me. A beautiful Sunday morning. A world flooded with sunshine. Church bells ringing, church choirs singing in one of America's foremost cities. Inspiring melodies from old masters filling the air. John and I sitting there in a hotel room, for all the world like two serfs, with Two Hundred Thousand Dollars in cash, waiting, ready, even anxious to take it and dump it into the laps of a gang of mur-



## OLD MASTERS AND NEW

derers and kidnappers. To paraphrase, "O tempora! O mores!" O——Hell!

Nearly ten hours had passed since we entered the hotel room. At 5:40 o'clock the telephone rang.

"Who's talking?" a voice asked.

"Kincaid," I replied.

"This is Moore. Did you get my wire?"

"Yes," I said.

"Well, are you ready to close the deal?"

"I should be, if I knew that I were dealing with the right parties."

"You ought to know by now," the voice said. "Listen now, follow these instructions. Take a Yellow Cab, drive to the LaSalle Hotel, get out, take the suitcase in your right hand and start walking west."

"I'll be there at 6:20," I replied. "I have a friend who came up here with me—may I bring him along?"

"Hell, no!" he shouted back. "We know all about your friend, we saw him on the train last night. You come alone and unarmed."

While I was talking, John Catlett had been gesticulating and in subdued tones

## CRIMES' PARADISE

insisting that I demand he be permitted to come along. I hung up the receiver.

"I'm going with you," quietly said Catlett.

"Why, John," I said, "it can't be done. It might be a fatal error."

"Then I'm going in your place," he stated.

We had bivouaced together around many a camp fire, the best place of all to learn the timbre of a man's soul. Those years of camaraderie had cemented a friendship with a bond of steel. I felt deeply sorrowful for Catlett. The gangsters had decreed that he sit supinely idle at the crashing climax. My task was easy. His was bitter. His persuasive powers of argument, under different circumstances, would have weakened my determination to abide implicitly by the rigid instructions of our gangland masters. He argued that no harm could come to him and that he could explain the situation to them satisfactorily. He even offered the suggestion that my being a co-trustee of the Slick Estate made it much more desirable that no harm come to me than to him, especially in the dreaded event that the ab-

## OLD MASTERS AND NEW

ductors intended doing away with Urschel after the pay-off.

Meeting the supreme test of unselfish friendship under white hot heat is a priceless heritage. Catlett more than met it. I picked up my hat and the Gladstone with the ransom money. John bade me Godspeed and good luck. The hope came to me that when the time arrived to go down the long trail to the last round-up, I would be so fortunate as to have a pal like John Catlett to ride herd on me.

I carried a 380 Colt automatic in my belt—a futile gesture. The man who took the money from me that day confessed to me in the court room at Oklahoma City three months later, during his trial, that they had me covered with machine guns all the while. Had anything happened at the pay-off, I'd never have gotten my hand to my gun.

I stepped from the cab in front of the LaSalle Hotel, on Kansas City's fashionable Linwood Boulevard, attempting to appear leisurely, at ease. I started walking west. Before I had gone twenty paces I set the suitcase down, reached in my pocket for a cigarette, and struck a match.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

As I applied the flame to the tobacco, I tilted the cigarette to as high an angle as possible, so that, as I held it, thus, I had a clear sweeping vision from under my hatbrim, of the entire street ahead. What my eyes kodaked in that brief survey was not in the least reassuring to my peace of mind. Two big cars were parked across the street, space enough between to permit a quick getaway. Three men occupied each car.

I had read Walter Noble Burns' "The One Way Ride," and gangland scenes from that stirring epic came vividly to my mind. I slowly resumed my westward trek.

Suddenly out of nowhere I skylined a bulky figure come swinging down the sidewalk toward me. I knew instantly that the big moment in the payoff had arrived. My adversary had black hair, dark skin, was nearly six feet in height, weighed about one hundred and eighty-five pounds. He was stylishly dressed in a natty summer suit with a turned-down Panama hat. He wore two-tone shoes, his tie was immaculately knotted into the collar of his well-fitting two-tone shirt.

## OLD MASTERS AND NEW

Yet his nervous, shifting, swinging stride; his furtive glances screamed to me, like a siren, his mission. He came directly opposite me without giving me a glance. Then he stopped, suddenly, five feet on my right.

"I'll take that grip," he said, his shifty glance half on me and half trying to cover the direction from which I had come.

I studied him a moment before I spoke, determined above all else in the world that I would so mentally catalogue and photograph him that I would be able to identify him should the occasion ever present itself. My hesitation seemed to make him more nervous.

"Hurry up," he commanded.

"How do I know you are the right party?" I argued.

"Hell, you know damned well I am," he replied.

"But," I said, "Two Hundred Thousand Dollars is a lot of money. We are carrying out our part of the agreement to the letter. What assurance have we that you'll do what you promise?"

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"Don't argue with me, the boys are waiting," he rasped.

I was studying his voice, his gestures, every detail, and playing for time.

"Tell me," I said, "when we may expect Urschel home? I am going back to the hotel to telephone his wife. What shall I tell her?"

"I'll see you at the hotel in twenty minutes," he answered, shifting gingerly from one foot to the other, his face growing a sunlit crimson.

I set the suitcase down, between my feet. "Wait," I said, "tell me definitely what I can tell Mrs. Urschel."

"Urschel will be home within twelve hours."

"Now," he commanded, "you turn and walk to the LaSalle Hotel and don't look back."

I had neither the inclination nor the guts to look back. I hurriedly returned to the Muehlebach Hotel. To Catlett I explained details of the pay-off while I placed a call to the Urschel home. Berenice Urschel's voice came on the wire.

"I closed the deal for that farm," I told her. "It will require about twelve

## OLD MASTERS AND NEW

hours for the lawyers to examine the abstracts, then title will pass."

"Thanks," she said plaintively, but the vibrant timbre in her tones bespoke the pent-up emotions of a harried soul.

We had played the last card in the game to regain Urschel's freedom. The outcome was on the knees of the gods. Berenice Urschel had maintained throughout the eight days and nights of ordeal, an admirable calm and a constant supervision of every detail of the hazardous situation. In the final analysis of any moot topic her judgment and wish had prevailed. Arthur Seeligson had handled the negotiations with consummate skill and the utmost secrecy and expediency. The gangsters still had Urschel and our Two Hundred Thousand Dollars. Would they release him or would they murder him?

Subsequent court testimony showed that at that very moment the criminals were hotly debating that most appalling question. A woman witness testified on the stand in the subsequent trial, less than three months later, that Katherine Kelly had said,—



## CRIMES' PARADISE

"I told them (Kelly and Bates) that we had better kill the son-o-a-b---," (referring to Urschel). If they had done as I told them we wouldn't be in all this trouble today. I should have killed him myself."

Picture this scene in *CRIMES' PARADISE*.

On Monday afternoon, July 31, a big sixteen cylinder Cadillac car drove into the garage at the Shannon farm house. Two neatly dressed men stepped out. One of them carried a light-colored suitcase. They entered the house, placing the suitcase on a bed. The suitcase was opened to disgorge its contents—TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS IN TWENTY DOLLAR BILLS.

Picture the group who stood around the bed. There were the two chief participants in the crime. There was a slender dark woman of thirty, or thereabouts, stylishly gowned. Her mother was there, eyes glistening with pleasurable excitement and anticipation. Her step-father-in-law, a bald-headed, hawk-nosed old man, who unctuously rubbed his hands and smacked his thin lips awaiting his

## OLD MASTERS AND NEW

"cut" of the ten thousand, twenty-dollar bills.

CRIMES' PARADISE was staging a festival. Its deliriously happy inmates had no knowledge nor premonition that the TIDAL WAVE OF DESTINY was at that moment accelerating the swell which would eventually, and all too soon, engulf them.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OUT OF THE NIGHT

Catlett took the midnight train for Tulsa. I boarded "The Sooner" for Oklahoma City.

When I walked into the Urschel home at eight o'clock, Monday morning, I confidently expected to see Urschel there. I was doomed to chilling disappointment. An air of hopeful expectancy pervaded the house. After all, rain was falling, and Urschel's place of captivity might be hundreds of miles away. We cheerfully kicked away each dragging hour with the best sportsmanship we could muster. But when high noon came and nothing had developed, a deepening shadow began to enwrap the household.

One o'clock. Two o'clock. Three. Four. Five. We had been fools to believe that they would keep their promise. Why hadn't we started out fighting them from the first? Why hadn't we given the Federals full sway?

Berenice Urschel was surrounded by the members of her family including her

## OUT OF THE NIGHT

daughter, Betty; her sons, Tom and Earl; her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Frates; two of her brothers, J. A. Frates Jr. and Clifford; her brother-in-law, Arthur Seeligson; his brother, Lamar Seeligson; and Charles F. Urschel Jr. J. A. Frates Sr., Tom Slick, with young Charles Urschel, had hurried home from a vacation trip to Mexico City. Arthur Seeligson had rushed to the scene from a sojourn in North Carolina. Lamar Seeligson, formerly prosecuting attorney of the San Antonio, Texas, district, had flown to Oklahoma City immediately upon receiving the news of the kidnapping.

The conduct of that family during the long soul-trying days and nights of desperate uncertainty, probably constitutes an epic in the annals of the Division of Investigation. The Frates family, from which Berenice Urschel sprang, can take punishment with the stoicism of the Arapahoe. Mr. and Mrs. Frates, with Spartan courage, pleasantly refused, throughout the ordeal, to permit the atmosphere of that household to become

## CRIMES' PARADISE

surcharged with a feeling of hysteria or hopelessness.

Neither am I unmindful of the splendid conduct of Charles Urschel, Junior, sixteen year old son of the kidnapped victim. Reached over long distance in Mexico City, he listened to the shocking news that his father had been kidnapped by machine-gunners. In the event his father failed to return the youth would be left without a near, blood relative.

His soldierly courage on that occasion and throughout the harrowing days and nights which followed, was significant of the high regard in which he is held by classmates and faculty members of Culver Military Institute.

Eight o'clock. The monotonous patter of a slow, drizzling rain reminded me for all the world of a requiem played in minor chords. The telephone had even ceased its incessant buzzing. The silence was ominous.

In an effort to distract the minds of the crowd, for a brief while at least, I went to the kitchen to secure a mouse trap. Each night I had observed a mouse race across the expensive carpets and hide

## OUT OF THE NIGHT

under the divan in the sunroom. Coming back with the trap baited, I made much talk and with great gusto prepared to catch the little vagrant. As I knelt to place the device under the divan, the darn thing snapped right in my face! With a spasmodic jerk of involuntary muscles, I threw it to the ceiling. The explosive assortment of profanity that escaped me, astonished even my nearest acquaintances. The incident broke the spell of depressive gloom and suspense. Berenice Urschel, with the first genuine laugh I had heard from her for nine days, retired to her bedroom upstairs.

Twenty minutes later a gaunt, unkempt figure loomed at the back door of the house. The Federal Agent on guard, having never seen Urschel, was non-plussed, and called Lamar Seeligson to the door. With a whoop of joy, that ranch-bred Texan aroused the entire household.

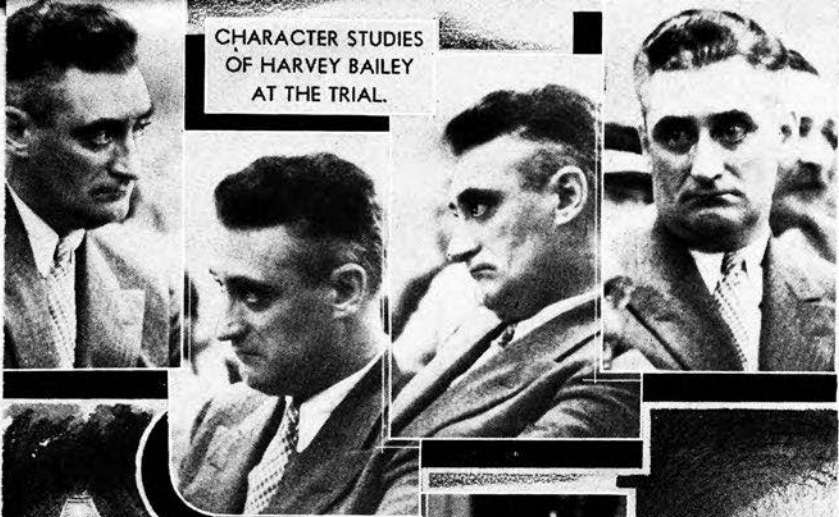
Urschel was a forlorn spectacle. His eyes, taped for nine days and nights, blinked uncertainly in the glare of lights. His form, usually immaculately groomed, now had the nondescript appearance of a roustabout. His mind seemed trying to

## CRIMES' PARADISE

emerge from the horrible nightmare through which he had lived. Nevertheless, he smiled his old congenial smile and enfolded his wife in his arms.



CHARACTER STUDIES  
OF HARVEY BAILEY  
AT THE TRIAL.



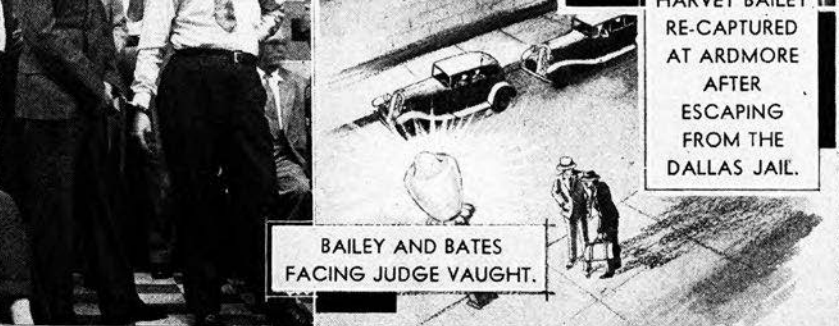
HARVEY BAILEY.



ALBERT BATES,  
THE MAN WITH  
MANY ALIASES.



HARVEY BAILEY  
RE-CAPTURED  
AT ARDMORE  
AFTER  
ESCAPING  
FROM THE  
DALLAS JAIL.



BAILEY AND BATES  
FACING JUDGE VAUGHT.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

There is a widely prevalent belief that undue newspaper publicity was a contributing factor in the sad and lamentably bungled attempt at a solution of the Lindbergh case.

Since that event, every agent of the Division of Investigation (which had no part in that particular investigation) is more careful about newspaper publicity, in advance of any development, than of his machine gun and ammunition.

When Urschel returned on that rainy night of July 31st, from his enforced absence of ten days, the Federals gave emphatic instructions as to just what details should be given The Press. The Urschel Clan, playing the game one hundred per cent with the Federals, from the start, followed instructions to the minutest detail.

It was a difficult task daily to look those fine, intelligent newspaper men in the eye and evade, or parry their questions or deliberately deceive them.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Facts concerning some features of the case would find their way to those keen newspaper minds. These details would vary grossly from the statements given by the family at the press interview each morning.

The Tulsa World on August 2, carried a story stating that the amount of ransom was \$200,000.00 and was paid in Kansas City and described Harvey Bailey as a member of the gang. The Urschel family and the department of Justice denied the report.

When Urschel returned, the newspapers insisted on a full statement, including the details of the pay-off and the amount of ransom. The Urschel family spokesman, Arthur Seeligson, either dissembled, or refused the requests, according to his instructions from the Division of Investigation.

This situation brought Walter Harrison, Managing Editor of the Daily Oklahoman and Times, recognized as one of the ablest and most brilliant newspaper men of the Southwest, to a fighting mood. Harrison swings a trenchant pen. His biting, scintillating wit and sarcasm,

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

at the annual gridiron banquets, are the nightmare of every politician. In his widely read daily column "The Tiny Times," he said—

"No one can prevent a flood of rumor and misstatement being broadcast with regard to the Urschel case.

"The Urschel family now is reaping the result of the foolish policy of withholding the amount of the ransom and of not telling frankly and completely all they know about the negotiations.

"Irresponsible free lance reporters have engaged in the wildest speculation as to ransom and the negotiations for the release.

"Within an hour I heard that the family was embarrassed at the thought that they paid so little as \$25,000 and that they were ashamed to publish the fact because they had paid more than \$250,000 without haggling.

"But the family need not be surprised at anything that is said or printed about the case. Walter Jarrett dissembled about his part in the kidnapping. Urschel himself has not been frank and complete in his stories. Arthur Seeligion thought it was quite all right to make definite misstatements to news-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

paper people who were attempting to cooperate.

"If Urschel would tell all he knows the hideout where he was held prisoner could be located within 24 hours.

"If Seeligson is cooperating to the limit of his ability the federal government will have all of the facts with regard to the handling of the money and has a dragnet out before this.

"If that sort of cooperation has been provided, what is the sense in not telling the public about it? The public has an interest in this case. Many a crime has been solved by broad publication of all surrounding circumstances.

"My friends have chided me for suggesting that the Urschels ought to go the limit in helping apprehend the criminals, saying that I would do just what they are doing if the misfortune were to fall on any member of my family. Probably I would try to meet the demands and pledge body and soul necessary for the safe return of a child. But I hope that I would have the courage, the wisdom and the common sense to see that I should have to devote my every energy to the apprehension of the kidnapers. I hope I would cooperate with the police, with the public, with the newspapers, by giving every shred

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

of evidence within the possession of myself and my friends. I hope I would make my first and only business after living through such a dreadful experience to do my bit lest such a calamity be visited upon some friend of mine because of my selfish satisfaction at the release and safe return of my own flesh and blood."

An editorial in another column said—

"Perhaps it is a sound theory that Dr. Carleton Simon, New York criminologist offers, when he says refusal to pay ransom is the strongest weapon in the war against kidnaping. The weakness in his plan lies in the difficulty of getting families directly interested to consider the welfare of society as a whole. The Urschel family, for example, manifest no such interest. Not only was the ransom paid, but a plea was made to call off the police and the press until negotiations were complete and the kidnaped man returned. Even after that a decree of secrecy was maintained that seems unwarranted. The family's chief concern was the safe return of Charles F. Urschel. It is pretty easy to understand that. Most families are selfish enough to follow

## CRIMES' PARADISE

such a course. The Simon plan will not be applied through the courage or public spirit of the wealthy.

"There remains the English plan, and it is worth considering. Great Britain makes the payment of ransom a felony, and the United Kingdom has no kidnapping problem. America has a kidnapping problem which must amount to a reign of terror to timid rich men, and one which subjects all wealthy citizens to the hazard of extortion. Our legislature and our congress will do well to consider the British law, if really desirous of curbing this phase of crime.

"Unless court procedure is modified and our police power made more efficient, there is little chance of that certainty of punishment which is most influential in curbing crime. Police efficiency is weakened by secrecy and timidity on the part of kidnaped victims and their families. In this Urschel case, the enforcement officers were held back to permit negotiations to proceed. That doubtless was the humane course, if only Charles F. Urschel and his family were to be considered. Doctor Simon thinks in terms of the general welfare of society, but that may be because he has not been kidnaped. It is easy enough to suggest the defiant



## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

course, but its application is an entirely different matter, and unlikely to be followed in such an emergency."

Arthur Seeligson, stung by what he deemed the injustice of the attack, wrote the following letter—

"Mr. Walter M. Harrison,  
Managing Editor,  
Oklahoman and Times,  
Oklahoma City, Okla.  
Dear Sir:

I realize that an individual is at a great disadvantage in any controversy with a newspaper. Even so, I cannot refrain from answering your statements in the Oklahoma City Times of August 2, 1933.

"For nearly three years, ever since the death of Tom Slick, your papers have at different times, given special prominence to various rumors, misstatements, and insinuations in regard to the Slick interests. We have become used to this, our friends know us for what we are. Apparently we cannot avoid what others want or are influenced to believe by some of the press.

"The amount of the ransom paid for C. F. Urschel's release and the circum-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

stances in connection therewith are purely personal matters, and no good, except to satisfy morbid curiosity and to give you a chance for additional headlines, can be accomplished by giving this information to you or the other papers.

"You are correct in stating that during the progress of the negotiations I did not give the true information to the papers. Absolute secrecy was necessary to insure the safe return of Charlie Urschel and that was our first consideration. Past experiences have proven to us the inadvisability of giving you, or your papers, any information of a personal nature.

"I feel that the Oklahoma papers, and yours have been among the worse offenders, were responsible for the kidnapping of C. F. Urschel more than any other one factor. The sensational stories, misrepresentations and insinuations about the size of the estate that have been printed at various times during the past three years, together with all other personal matters involving the different members of the Slick and Urschel families which you have featured, and headlined at every opportunity, has so focused attention on both of these families as to make them one

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

of the first targets for those in the kidnapping racket.

"You refer to the English system. If we could follow it, together with adequate censorship of certain papers, as I understand they have in England, and a capable national police system, I would agree with you.

"You have the reputation of being a good newspaper man, but I have never heard of your capabilities as a detective or police officer. There is absolutely no reason why we should give you further information except to satisfy a curiosity and make it possible for you to create additional headlines for your papers. By so doing, further obstacles would be put in the way of the Federal officers who are working on this case. I feel sure that they don't want you to have the facts any more than we do.

"Before your return, Mr. Bell agreed to withdraw your reporters who were constantly on guard around the Urschel residence. We appreciated that cooperation on the part of your papers and have so stated on various occasions.

"The so-called copyrighted articles which appeared in your papers, were not written or signed by C. F. Urschel, and certainly an erroneous impression was created by your action in the way

## CRIMES' PARADISE

that article was handled.

"No doubt you realize by this time that I resent the insinuations in your column "Tiny Times" and the editorial on the back page. You are known throughout the state for your sharp tongue and pen. Nothing is more contemptible and cowardly than to take advantage of Gridiron shows, or editorials to create impressions that might be erroneous, or as in this case, are untrue, and especially where the parties offended against are at such a disadvantage in attempting to answer.

"I hope you will be good sport enough to give this letter the same prominence that you have given to your own articles.

Yours truly,  
(Signed) Arthur Seeligson"

To which Harrison, through his column, made the following reply—

Mr. Arthur Seeligson,  
Trustee estates of Thomas B. Slick  
Colcord Building,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.  
Dear Sir:

"Your letter of Thursday discussing the kidnaping of Charles F. Urschel was deeply appreciated. You expressed

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yourself frankly. May I reply in kind and assure you that you need feel at no disadvantage. Every newspaper worthy of the name realizes that there are two sides to every story and is glad to offer its columns to anyone who feels he has been unfairly dealt with.

"Your charge that the newspapers are responsible for the kidnaping is too puerile to merit detailed discussion.

"If we have erred in publishing the estimated value of the Slick estate, it is because the estate itself never would place a figure upon it for publication. Governor Murray, J. Berry King, the attorney general, and other public officials were quoted on the size of the estate. Their zeal in securing to the state a proper inheritance tax may have led them into exaggeration. If we were at fault in trying to report accurately this litigation, I apologize.

"There is great glamour and romance attached to the late Tom Slick, "The King of Wildcatters," and the members of his family. As one of the richest families in the southwest, its members occupied a position at the peak for which they must pay the annoyances of public attention which come with fame and wealth.

"For newspaper stories based on this

## CRIMES' PARADISE

prominence and public interest, we stand accused of promoting the basest crime in Christendom.

"Calm reflection should persuade you that the newspapers of this nation alone have the power to bring public opinion to the point where kidnaping will be stamped out by an enraged citizenry.

"In the case of the degenerate Hickman, it was newspaper publicity that quickly caught the fleeing moron.

"In the Boettcher case, it was the alertness and immediate action of the victim, coupled with the remorseless drive of the law in Colorado, spurred by the press, that quickly cleared up the Denver kidnaping and brought the perpetrators to justice.

"If Mr. Urschel had telephoned the sheriff of Cleveland county Monday night when he was released, it is my conviction that his abductors never would have escaped. All dirt roads were impassable. The two concrete highways could have been barred within ten minutes.

"The fire that is flaming today and that is sure to crystallize in solution to this menace has been kindled and is being fanned by an aroused free press voicing the sentiments of an indignant people.

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

"May I disagree with your statement that the ransom and the circumstances connected therewith are purely personal matters? No felony is a private affair. The crime was against the body of Urschel, but in a legal and more unselfish sense, the assault was upon the law and order of a nation conceived "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

"Never before has any one asserted, or even suggested, that a felony is a family matter with which the public has no concern. On many an occasion when a felony has been committed, every member of the family involved has been taken to police headquarters and subjected to pitiless examination until every material fact has been revealed. We refuse to concede that any family is wealthy enough and prominent enough to justly claim superiority to the country's laws and police process. On the contrary, we feel that wealth and prominence carry with them a special duty to set a high example and help protect the weak.

"Your admission that you did not give the true information to the papers must not have been a pleasant confession. Acknowledging your paramount interest in the safe return of Mr.



## CRIMES' PARADISE

Urschel, I cannot justify your blandly stating that no contact had been made as late as Saturday night, when the sole interest in our visit was to help you. It was not necessary for you to make a direct misstatement.

"You have no basis for suggesting that we have ever violated your confidence. I know of no ethical newspaperman who would not go to jail rather than violate a confidence. We agreed to cooperate and we kept our part of the bargain. When we learned the truth about Walter Jarratt's weak statement, we withheld the most important development in the case at your request. Years ago when Mrs. Slick was worrying about the safety of her children, we withheld publication of their photographs. I also recall some unpleasantness on the part of the Slick estate because of our publication of drilling activities. We were told that what the Slick estate did in the oil fields was none of our business. Although you withheld all information possible, at that time, we considered drilling reports legitimate news and proceeded to get the information as best we could.

"We agree that a more capable national police system such as England's

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

is our vital need, but I will not subscribe to the suggestion of press censorship to enable individuals to treat with felons. England has no such press censorship. Can you picture the language of the London "Thunderer" if such a construction of private rights were set up in the British Isles?

"As to Mr. Urschel's signed story, I deny that any advantage was taken of Mr. Urschel. I did virtually all of the questioning of the victim on the morning after his return. Upon my arrival at the office, I reconstructed the narrative in the first person. I called Mrs. Urschel on the telephone and told her I was sending out the manuscript. I asked her to read it with Mr. Urschel and requested them jointly to correct, delete and amend it as they pleased. Mrs. Urschel said she would gladly see that this was done. The manuscript carried the line.

'BY CHARLES F. URSCHEL'

on the first page centered in a quarter of a page of white space. The story was revised by the Urschels, one paragraph omitted, another added and returned to me. It was a fair and true report. Most of it was in Mr. Urschel's own

## CRIMES' PARADISE


language. The only addition made by me before the story went to the printers was the line, 'Copyright, 1933, by the North American Newspaper Alliance and the Oklahoma Publishing Co.'

"The Oklahoma Publishing Co. is the Oklahoma member of the North American Newspaper Alliance, a cooperative group of independent newspapers. This story was not sold and no one received a dime for it.


"Your interest in this case seems to have been single—the safe return of Mr. Urschel. Our interest is double—the restoration of the victim, and the capture of the culprits for the protection of society.

"If the price of cooperation means the abridgment of the sacred right of a free press, ordained in the constitution of the United States, thanks to that great benefactor, Thomas Jefferson, I say the price is too great to pay for the probation of any single man or any mighty family.

"The quest for truth is a disheartening and endless effort. Newspapers trying hard for the truth, are often thwarted by the attitude of men in high places in whom they have confidence who deliberately hide facts and permit the publication of false and misleading in-



FLAUNTING  
DEATH THREATS,  
URSCHEL TAKES  
THE WITNESS  
STAND.



BATES, BAILEY,  
"BOSS" SHANNON  
AND WIFE RECEIVE  
LIFE SENTENCES.  
ARMON SHANNON  
10 YEAR SUSPENDED  
SENTENCE.



THE JURY IN THE  
BAILEY - BATES -  
SHANNON TRIAL.



SOME OF THE  
BOYS FROM  
MINNEAPOLIS  
AND ST. PAUL  
WHO WERE  
ACCUSED OF  
BEING  
"MONEY  
CHANGERS".



COURTROOM SCENE.

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

formation. For such patent inabilities to fulfill our mission, I apologize and plead the weakness of human nature.

"You are welcome to this column Saturday if you care to continue this interesting discussion.

"Yours truly,

"Walter M. Harrison."

With the born instinct of a true newspaperman, for absolute fairness and justice, Walter Harrison, in his column "The Tiny Times," of August 15, said—

"Congratulations to the Department of Justice for doing a grand piece of work on the Charles F. Urschel kidnaping case.

"Only one of the principals remains at large. We should not be surprised to hear that the last hunted man is in custody before this column gets into print. The Federal officers have his number.

"The capture of the Bailey gang eliminates the most vicious ring of criminals loose in the southwest. The successful drive of the Department of Justice in this case will throw a scare into gangsters everywhere and reassure the people that our government can go

## CRIMES' PARADISE

places and do things when it gets its blood up.

"In the light of subsequent events, we did the Urschel family an injustice in suggesting that they were not co-operating wholeheartedly with the government. In our joy at the outcome of this crime, we are happy to acknowledge our fault.

"In a radio address on a national hookup last night William Stanley, assistant to the attorney general, said the Urschel family was the first to respond to the request of the government—that Washington be contacted immediately in the event of a kidnaping. Mr. Stanley said the Urschel family had Washington on the long distance telephone a short time after the two gunmen drove away with their victim and that throughout the hunt the associates of the victim gave the government complete cooperation.

"Mr. Stanley repeated the government's suggestions to the families of gang victims. He urged immediate action with the Department of Justice and stated that the family 'should make no public statement until the proper time.'

"In view of this suggestion, we draw the inference that Arthur Seeligson

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

gave out false information to the newspapers attempting to cooperate with them in Oklahoma City, with the knowledge of the Federal operatives.

"We also infer that it was with the advice of the Federal operatives that the amount of the ransom and other unimportant details were omitted upon the return of Mr. Urschel.

"Apparently the Department of Justice is to be the judge of the 'proper time' for a public statement. The grandest statement, of course, is the announcement that a crime has been cleared up and the criminals are in custody.

"Ahead of the actual cleanup, the government policy should be to release all information that will not jeopardize the hunt and to prohibit the giving out of any false and misleading information.

"Newspaper cooperation is a logical arm of the national cooperation that is being sought to eliminate the racketeer. The efficient Department of Justice can secure that cooperation without stint or limit by playing fair and shooting square."

On the following page appears a photostatic copy of a letter from J. Edgar



## CRIMES' PARADISE

Hoover, Director of the Division of Investigation, to Charles F. Urschel, which elucidates the affair.

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director

### DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

October 3, 1933.

Mr. Charles F. Urschel,  
327 Northwest 18th Street,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

My dear Mr. Urschel:

Perhaps I should have at an earlier date advised you of my gratification because of your excellent, whole-hearted cooperation with this Division in its conduct of the investigation of the kidnaping of which you were the victim. The convictions on Saturday, I am sure, bear ample testimony of the wisdom of the advice given by this Department to the families and friends of persons who have been kidnaped, and I am quite sure that if the government enjoyed the same measure of cooperation which you have afforded it from all others who are visited by this despicable crime, kidnaping would no longer be popular in the underworld.

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER  
DIRECTOR

Division of Investigation

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I thank you sincerely for your cooperation and extend to you my congratulations upon the successful prosecution of this case, to which you contributed in no little degree.

With expressions of my kindest personal regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover  
Director.

## THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

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## CHAPTER X

### PARADISE FOUND

The Federals were champing at the bit. They had been advised of every detail of the pay-off and had kept their word to make no move that would endanger Urschel's life. They had been immediately notified of Urschel's return and in ten minutes Gus Jones and Ralph Colvin were at the Urschel home. Now, they must have instant action. Gus Jones and Colvin politely attempted to conceal their eagerness to begin questioning the ransomed victim.

"I'm so tired," pleaded Urschel. "Can't you wait until I get some sleep?"

"Time," said Jones, "is the very essence of the successful solution of any kidnapping."

To my mind there is no person in the world with the utter fearlessness of Charles Urschel. One month later, I accompanied him, with the Federals, into a trap laid by a demented man who claimed to have sixty-nine thousand dollars of the buried ransom money. It was

## PARADISE FOUND

arranged that I should go to the farmhouse door and make the contact. Urschel protested. The Federals insisted that he remain with them, some distance back, under protection of machine guns.

"Charles," I remarked, "they won't harm me. If it's a trap, it's for you. Anyhow, since this kidnapping affair, I have made up my mind that whatever is to be, will be, and can't be dodged."

"Fine," he said. "If that's the way you feel, go right on. I've been in that mental attitude for a long time."

If he could have seen my knees shaking at the time, he would have known I was lying.

"If you can tell us something—anything," said Jones, "so we can get started."

"They told me," Urschel said, "that if I ever told anything they would get me and torture me, would kill and maim members of my family—that they were more powerful than the Federal Government. But, having suffered the tortures of the damned, I don't want anyone to have to go through with that to which I have been subjected. I'll tell you all I know,

## CRIMES' PARADISE

only let me make it brief tonight for I am so tired."

He described his experiences, interrupted alternately by Jones and Colvin, for particulars. After thirty minutes, utter exhaustion showed in Urschel's face, and Mrs. Urschel ordered the interview—"ended for tonight."

The next morning Jones was on the scene early. He and Urschel retired to an upstairs room at eleven a. m., and both lost track of time. Jones asked a thousand questions.

In the beginning Urschel had asserted he had no idea where he was held, or the identity of the persons holding him captive. "It seems to me almost like searching for a needle in a hay stack."

"Well, you know, Mr. Urschel, we found one of those things one time. You can't tell, we might find another."

After Jones and Urschel had been locked in that room for eight hours without the slightest interruption from outside, Lamar Seeligson rapped at the door and requested that they come downstairs to eat something.

Urschel told Jones that after the ejec-

## PARADISE FOUND

tion of Jarrett from the car about nine miles east of Oklahoma City, he was blindfolded with adhesive tape, and that these bandages were renewed and kept in place the entire time of his detention.

"We drove," he said, "on dirt roads most of the time. They told me that I was not to see or hear anything on the trip, and that if I did, I would never come home, for they would kill me. They had some chains in the car and they informed me that if I made any outcry or demonstration, they were prepared to give me a hypodermic injection, which would put me to sleep for twenty-four hours."

"We traveled rough side roads. After a few hours I heard roosters crowing and knew daylight was approaching. They drove into a farm yard and said they would have to change cars. They placed a turned down Panama hat on me and dark glasses, so that I would not be noticeable. We left the farm house and drove for many hours, finally stopping in a garage at some farm house. I asked what time it was, and they said about two-thirty in the afternoon, and that we had driven some 350 miles in a direct



## CRIMES' PARADISE

line. They kept me in the garage until after dark, then took me into a house. I did not sleep any that night.

"In the morning, Monday, July 24th, I had a meager breakfast. Still I was blindfolded. One of my captors read the headlines from the newspapers and told me that since my family and friends had called in the Federals, negotiations would be difficult."

Urschel described how he was moved that evening to another house, about a mile away, where he was handcuffed and chained to a baby's high-chair. An old quilt was thrown on the floor for his bed. The kidnappers alternated in standing guard over him until Friday. Two other guards were placed over him from Friday until Monday. He learned to identify these guards as "Boss" and "Potatoes."

He told how his efforts to convey to his friend, John Catlett, that no big ransom demands were to be met, were thwarted. He said they gave him a tablet and a pencil and commanded him to write his first letter. In it he explained to his friend that his personal accounts were low and

## PARADISE FOUND

would not withstand the withdrawal of a large sum of ransom payment. He explained the status of the T. B. Slick Estate, and said that if the Estate funds had to be touched to ransom him, just to forget about it.

This letter, the kidnappers, standing back of Urschel so that he could not see them, tore into bits. They made him write the letter which was enclosed in the ransom note to Mr. Catlett. They dictated it and made no suggestion that any amount asked could not be paid.

"The two kidnappers left on Friday," Urschel said, "to negotiate for the ransom money. They said they would be back Sunday. They did not return until the middle of the afternoon on Monday. They gave me a basin of water, a razor, a small mirror and let me shave. Then I was blindfolded again. One man took me in a car and started driving. In about an hour we were stopped and were joined by another man. They told me they were taking me home, and that if I ever told anything concerning the kidnapping they would kill me and my entire family. They let me out in the northern limits of Nor-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

man, Oklahoma, and told me to walk back to a filling station and call a taxi."

Describing the two guards that were left with him from Friday until Monday, Urschel said,—

"One was an old man and one a young man. It was apparent that the old man wished to impress upon me that I was north of Oklahoma and Texas. He made repeated references to places 'away' down in Texas and Oklahoma."

Urschel described the shack minutely, the conversations, the daily routine, the weather. He had made mental notes of everything. He had fingerprinted planks in the walls, the window sills, the corners of the floor. Yet his most astounding revelation was the fact that an airplane had passed over the shack daily, at 9:45 a. m. and at 5:45 p. m., except Sunday morning, July 30th.

After he noted the hum of the motor the first day, he decided that there was a marker that could be read on the run. He was too wise ever to mention the plane, but he would count mentally, the minutes after each plane passage, and then innocently inquire the time of day.

## PARADISE FOUND

Frequently throughout the days he would ask the same question so that his guards would not suspect anything. He tagged the plane time to the absolute minute.

Urschel said he was given water in an old tin cup without a handle. That the water had a mineral taste, that the well from which this water was obtained, was northwest of the house, and that the water was drawn from a well by a rope and bucket, on a pulley which made considerable noise.

Urschel will be known in history as the cleverest, most self-possessed, kidnapped victim of all time. He actually made mental notations of twenty-five essential details which checked out, on investigation, almost one hundred per cent correct.

A high official of the Department of Justice in a birthday greeting to Urschel, recently wrote:

"I would under no circumstances wish you any harm, but I can not help wish that all our kidnapping victims were you. Our work would be easy."

Jones left the Urschel home with elas-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

tic step. Never had he had a break like this. A kidnapped victim who had poise and sense enough to study every sound and every extraneous circumstance, the environment, and the conversation of his abductors.

Several things in Urschel's story immediately impressed Jones with the idea that the kidnappers' intentions had obviously been to have Urschel believe that he was somewhere in the vicinity of Joplin or Kansas City. Old man Shannon had repeatedly used the expression "way down in Oklahoma and Texas," evidently attempting to fix the thought permanently in Urschel's mind, that he was being held somewhere north of those two states.

When Bates and Kelly returned from their successful completion of the pay-off at Kansas City, they informed Urschel that they had bought him a new hat and shirt which they would permit him to wear home. The hat was a number  $7\frac{1}{8}$ , too small for Urschel, but he wore it. The markings and advertisements in it had been unmolested. Inside the crown in bold print was the following: "New-

## PARADISE FOUND

mans—Joplin's Greatest Store."

Gus Jones had been too long tracking criminals to fall for this bait. It was recalled that the letter of instructions for the pay-off had been mailed in Joplin, Missouri. I shall always recall one laconic remark Jones made — "Too much Joplin."

The abductors had told Urschel when they arrived at the Shannon farm on July 23, that they had driven 350 miles in a straight line. Urschel knew that he had been in the car fourteen hours.

When Urschel was carried to Norman and released, the trip required eight hours. He recognized, unmistakably, one landmark on the return trip. It was the one-half mile long rattling bridge across the Canadian River between Lexington and Purcell. His eyes were taped but his ears and brain were functioning.

Jones worked on the premise that the fourteen-hour trip, and the statement about the 350 mile drive in a straight line, were efforts at concealment and that the true distance of the hideout from Oklahoma City could be approximated by figuring the eight hours' time, and that

## CRIMES' PARADISE

the direction was indicated by the Lexington bridge, which is south of Oklahoma City. The airplane clue could be used to localize the spot but in figuring the passing point of the plane twice daily, many factors must be taken into consideration, including tail winds, head winds, the departure of planes from their starting point each day on exact schedule time, or any variation of such schedule and the accuracy of the logs kept daily by the pilots.

In response to the many questions, Urschel recalled that Sunday morning, after the first stop, the kidnappers drove through a very hard shower of rain. The roads got slippery, and on one occasion, they almost stuck.

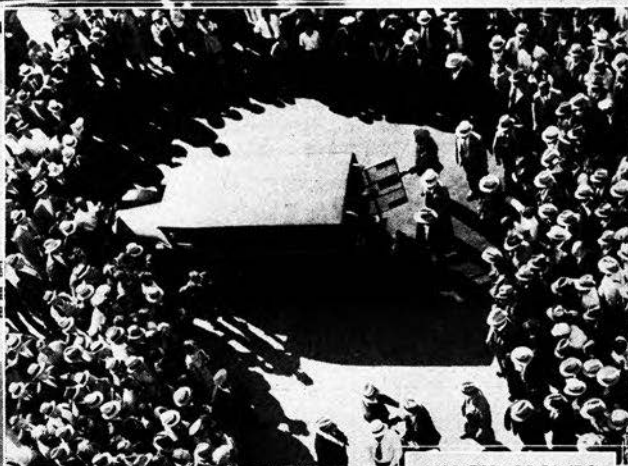
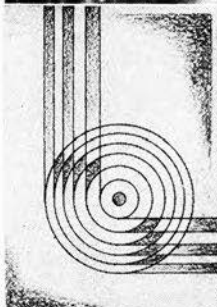
He recalled this same morning after driving through the rain they stopped at a filling station to replenish their gas supply. The two men stepped out of the car. He heard them talking to the filling station attendant, who was a woman. He heard no traffic, indicating a filling station on a country byroad. He remembered that one of the men asked the woman if the rain that had fallen would do the



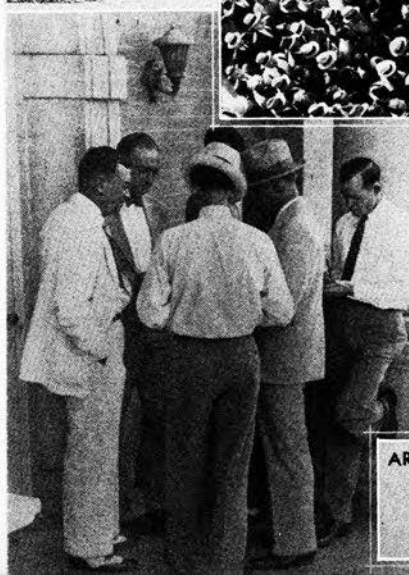
BREAKING ALL PRECEDENTS IN  
A FEDERAL COURTROOM  
BY PERMITTING SOUND PICTURES  
TO BE TAKEN.



ARTHUR SEELIGSON.



EXCITED CROWDS  
WATCH THE  
PRISONERS BEING  
TAKEN FROM AN  
ARMORED CAR INTO  
THE COURTROOM.



ARTHUR AND LAMAR SEELIGSON  
IN A PRESS CONFERENCE  
ON THE  
URSCHEL FRONT PORCH.

## PARADISE FOUND

crops any good. Her reply was, "No, they are all burned up, but it may help the broom corn some."

The keen-minded Government agents knew that there were certain localities within a radius of a hundred miles of Oklahoma City where broom corn was raised, and they immediately had those sections checked, and also ascertained where local crops were burned up by drought.

Urschel recalled that it again rained the evening he reached his final destination. This, he said, was a hard rain, lasting more than an hour. He was certain also that there was no rain the following day, Monday; no rain Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday. He said that on Saturday morning a stiff wind started blowing from the south and lasted throughout the day. In fact, the wind blew with such velocity that he expected it to finish in a real storm, therefore, asked his grizzly old guard if they ever had any cyclones in that section.

Boss Shannon, who, afterwards at the trial, claimed he had guarded Urschel through fear of his life, said:—

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"No, but they have lots of them—*Down in Oklahoma and Texas.*"

Urschel told Jones that it again rained on Sunday, the day before his release. A slow, all-day, drizzling rain—the dreariest day of the nine during which he was held captive.

Here were facts. The Federal men pounced upon them with glee. Weather reports were minutely checked. Where was there a locality in which it had rained on Sunday, July 23rd, and had not rained the 24th—25th—26th—27th—28th or 29th—then again rained on the 30th?

Also, where was there a locality where a strong wind blew the entire day of Saturday, July 29th? When these Government sleuths could find a locality in which the reliable government weather reports would record these happenings, and if by chance, over this same spot, an airplane had wended its way morning and evening—then, possibly, the haystack wherein the vagrant needle was hidden, might be visualized.

At sunup next morning, Jones and Agent Frank Blake, in a high-powered

## PARADISE FOUND

bi-plane, were soaring over the rugged, jagged peaks of the Arbuckle Uplift, winging across the timbered ridges of the Kiamichi Mountains of southeastern Oklahoma, cruising over the turbulent crests of the Arkansas and Missouri Ozarks, and, on the second day were flying low over the outlaw hideouts of the Osage Badlands.

Jones and Agent Frank Blake had checked, meticulously, every airplane route within five hundred miles of Oklahoma City. The big point in Urschel's story was that an airplane passed over his place of imprisonment at 9:45 each morning, and at 5:45 each afternoon, excepting that morning of Sunday, July 30th.

Careful checking of all plane routes, placed the American Airway plane from Amarillo to Fort Worth, Texas, crossing a given point near Paradise, Texas, at the approximate times noted by Urschel. Moreover, a rainstorm, in that section Sunday morning, caused the pilot to deviate from his usual course.

A further check of Government weather reports in the vicinity of Paradise, Texas,

## CRIMES' PARADISE

brought forth the interesting information that rain had fallen in that locality on the same Sunday that Charles Urschel had reached his kidnapped destination. Also, that no rain had fallen in that section during the six succeeding days. Another item was discovered that was almost as interesting as the airplane. This was the weather report recording a wind of better than twenty-five miles per hour velocity, at Paradise, all day Saturday, July 29th, and, in addition, a fourteen-hour rain had fallen on Sunday, July 30th.

That dreary, rainy day for the shackled Charles Urschel was a big aid in discovering the concealed needle in the haystack.

Urschel, had, in subsequent interviews, given Jones a minute description of the cabin in which he was held prisoner, the quantity of livestock, of chickens, a bull, a flock of guineas, a bulldog, a mule, and other details he had gleaned from apparently innocent questioning and conversations with his garrulous guards, together with surreptitious glances obtained from under his bandages. Even the shingles missing from a corner of the

## PARADISE FOUND

porch had been remarked, the direction the floor boards ran, the way the house faced, and the number of rooms it contained.

From these descriptions Jones sketched a map of the house, its contents and surroundings. That map is now on file in the Department of Justice Offices at Washington, and is almost as accurate as the subsequent photographs taken of the farm house and surroundings.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE MONEY CHANGERS

Immediately after Mr. Urschel's return, the serial numbers of the ransom bills, totalling \$200,000.00 were circulated to banks throughout the United States, and it was determined that a number of these bills had been exchanged at the Hennepin State Bank at Minneapolis, Minnesota. Investigation there disclosed the fact that Sam Frederick, a truck driver of the Wolk Transfer Company, had presented one thousand dollars of the ransom money to that bank.

Frederick was immediately located, by the Federal agents, and questioned. He admitted that on August 5, 1933, his boss, Charlie Wolk, requested him to accompany two unknown men to the bank, where he obtained a cashier's check under the name of S. H. Peters, in the amount of \$1,800.00. This he immediately gave to the two unknown individuals.

Charles Albert Wolk, when interrogated by Federal Agents, advised that, on the early morning of August 5th, he re-



## THE MONEY CHANGERS

ceived a telephone call from a person known as "Barney" who requested him to get a cashier's check for \$1,800.00. That subsequent to this call, "Barney", with an unknown individual, came to his office and requested him to accompany them to the Bank for the purpose of obtaining a cashier's check. And that he did not go with them, but sent his driver, Sam Frederick.

It later developed that the cashier's check had been presented for payment by Peter Valder, alias William Nelson. Valder, upon close questioning by the insistent Federals, admitted that he was well acquainted with Barney Berman. He admitted that, on August 2nd, Berman gave him a check for \$1,000.00 drawn on a bank in Fargo, North Dakota, with the request that he cash the same, which he did; that on August 5th, Mr. Peterson of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Minneapolis, called him and advised that this check had been returned marked, "insufficient funds." Under further questioning, he said that Berman gave him a cashier's check drawn to the order of S. H. Peters, on the Hennepin State

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Bank of Minneapolis, in the amount of \$1,800.00, and requested him to take out the \$1,000.00 check which had been marked "insufficient funds," and to get the balance of \$800.00 in \$100.00 bills.

It was also discovered that on August 7th, 1933, \$500.00 identified as part of the Urschel ransom money, was deposited in the First National Bank at Minneapolis by one Sam Kronick. This person, appearing for the first time in the money changing, was located by a Federal Agent and claimed that he had obtained this money from his cousin, Sam Kozberg, on August the 5th.

The Federal sleuths were not to be confused by names that carried no smack of Irish lineage. Sam Kozberg was later taken into custody and alleged that on August 5th, Barney Berman, at his request, gave him the twenty-five \$20.00 bills, totalling \$500.00 which he had deposited.

No wonder the Division of Investigation requires its agents to be graduate lawyers or expert accountants. They encounter admixtures of races and elements of intrigue and duplicity that requires

## THE MONEY CHANGERS

even more than law and a knowledge of accountancy.

Edward Barney Berman was next closeted with the untiring trail dogs of Uncle Sam. He told them that on August 3, 1933, he was approached by a man who gave his name as "Collins" and stated that he wanted to buy some liquor, and that he, Berman, referred him to his associate, "Kid" Cann, who sold Collins 125 cases of whiskey for \$5,500.00, which was paid in bills, a number of which were of the \$20.00 denomination, and which had been identified as part of the Urschel ransom money. Berman admitted that he had accompanied Sam Frederick to the Hennepin State Bank and purchased the cashier's check for \$1,800.-00, also admitted that he was accompanied by Clifford Skelly.

Berman's associate, referred to as "Kid" Cann, was later identified as Isadore Blumenfeld, who, when placed under the searchlight of Federal inquisitiveness, said that on August 5, 1933, a man came into his office at the West Hotel in Minneapolis and talked to Barney Berman, who, in turn, referred this individual known as

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Collins, to him; that he consummated the deal for 125 cases of whiskey for \$5,500.00 with Collins and that he turned over the money to another associate, Clifford Skelly. Skelly claimed that he was in business with Berman and Blumefeld and told the same story as Blumefeld and Berman.

## CHAPTER XII

### PARADISE LOST

In the meantime, through divers ways known only to the Division of Investigation, information had been quietly garnered relative to that section of Wise County, Texas, wherein was located Paradise. A man in whom the agents became particularly interested was R. G. Shannon, a political boss of that county. But investigation must be carried on with the utmost secrecy and in a manner not to excite suspicion. An agent of the Division of Investigation canvassed that territory as a representative of a commercial organization, seeking to ascertain the values of farming lands, with a view to extending loans. He was a very amiable man, visiting with the citizens and discussing with them crops, livestock, and other matters in which he seemed thoroughly conversant.

This agent had with him the now famous map drawn by Gus Jones. When he finally found his way to the five-hundred-acre ranch farm of R. G. Shannon,

## CRIMES' PARADISE

passed the time of day and then visited the home of Armon Shannon, son of R. G. Shannon, he had all the thrill that comes to the big game hunter when he realizes that his quarry is near.

Here, indeed, was the place that was in the mind of the man who had drawn the map this agent was carrying around in his pocket. The three-room house, facing south, cornfield in front, water well northeast, with the "old oaken bucket". The canny representative of Uncle Sam was thirsty. It was a hot day in August. He asked for a drink of fresh water from the well. The water had a *strong mineral taste*.

There were three hogs and two pigs in the pen behind the house. The four milch cows were in the pen at the barn. The white-faced bull was in a small enclosure southeast of the house. The map was beginning to look like a prophetic writing. The big thrill, however, was yet to come to the investigator. He entered the house to discuss his business of farm loans with young Armon Shannon. Here in the southeast room, was the old iron bedstead. In a corner was the old five-foot

## PARADISE LOST

wooden bench. The floor boards ran east and west. The floors were bare. The front window had one pane missing, and the opening was filled with a piece of cardboard.

Hanging on the wall was a small mirror with a crack in the upper left hand corner. What a memory that fellow Ur-schel had! What a faculty for detail! The only time he had seen that item of household luxury in the Armon Shannon shack was, when, after nine days and nights with eyes completely taped, except for the one brief interval when he was forced to write his ransom appeal, was when his two jailers had permitted him to place this mirror so that he could see how to relieve himself of a week's growth of beard.

When Edward Down reported back to the Dallas office of the Division of Investigation, telephone wires began humming. The Oklahoma City office was informed that the Shannon farm matched the map of Jones one hundred per cent. Also that there had been, for months, mysterious visitors coming and going into and through the little town of Par-



## CRIMES' PARADISE

adise, Texas, many of them bound for the Shannon place. The information was also relayed that Boss Shannon had a step-daughter married to George Kelly, whose record and associates were well and unfavorably known to the Federal officials.

The Oklahoma City Federal office communicated with the Dallas office shortly thereafter and a rendezvous was arranged at Denton, Texas. At this place there quietly assembled four Government agents, and eight straight shooting picked officers from the Dallas and Fort Worth Police Departments. The old gun-fighting Bill Eads and Charles F. Urschel accompanied Gus Jones from Oklahoma City to the gathering point.

The men composing this grim squad were under no misapprehensions as to the grave possibilities they might encounter if the persons they thought might be at the Shannon ranch should actually be there. Quietly they slipped out of the old historic town of Denton, Texas, the place from whence had come Sam Bass, the most notorious of Texas' many outlaws.

The party reached the outskirts of the

## PARADISE LOST

town of Decatur, county seat of Wise County, wherein lay Paradise, only a few miles from the Shannon place. The hot July sun was setting in a sultry glare, casting its last rays as a beacon signal over a woodland soon to become famous. Jones called a halt. Doubtfully he looked at the fast-disappearing sun and, turning to his brother officers, said, "Boys, we have about twenty-six miles to go; it is over rough, winding, sandy roads. We might reach the place before dark, but even if we should, we would not have enough daylight ahead of us to attend to the task that I feel sure is before us. My judgment is to back off, go down to Fort Worth, get a little sleep and hit the place just at daybreak."

Whether this change of plans on Jones' part was psychic or just his usual good horse sense may be debatable, but that decision was responsible for the capture of a man who was, unquestionably, at that time, America's foremost outlaw.

Due to the nature of the surroundings at the Shannon place, it was impossible to hide the cars and creep upon the place. This was explained to the other officers

## CRIMES' PARADISE

by Jones and the agent who had been on the farm during the investigation a few days previous. There was only one road into the premises and it led immediately in front of the Shannon headquarters house.

In the parlance of the poker player, there was nothing to do but "move in". The cavalcade of three cars, at daybreak, moved up the narrow sandy lane which passed the Shannon house. When immediately in front of the dwelling the leading car suddenly whipped into a small clearing at the very front door of the house and the officers, led by Jones, fell out, deploying, with steady fingers on triggers and eyes alert, to discern the slightest show of hostility.

Jones had discerned, in the dim light, the figure of a man apparently asleep on an improvised bed in the rear of the yard. As he started around the corner of the house an old grizzled sinister-eyed man stepped from the front door of the house. Urschel, who was close behind with a sawed-off shot gun, could not suppress an exclamation. He instantly recognized his unwelcome companion dur-

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER,  
DIRECTOR OF INVESTIGATION,  
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE. 1934.



AGENT "DOC"  
WHITE OF EL PASO,  
WHO PISTOL  
WHIPPED MACHINE  
GUN KELLY AT  
THE TRIAL--KELLY  
ATTACKED WHITE  
AT THE  
ELEVATOR DOOR.



GUS JONES  
AND HYDE  
EXAMINE  
BAILEY'S  
MACHINE  
GUN AND  
CHAINS  
USED ON  
URSCHEL



DETECTIVES  
WEATHERFORD  
AND  
SWINNEY.  
FT. WORTH  
WITH BAILEY'S  
MACHINE GUN.



URSCHEL AND  
AGENT COLVIN  
ARE PLEASED AT  
THE CAPTURE  
OF THE KELLYS.



R. H. COLVIN.  
FEDERAL AGENT.

## PARADISE LOST

ing the several days he had lain in chains. Boss Shannon, as it proved to be, was quietly taken in charge and told that if he attempted to arouse others who might be there his life would not be worth a thin dime.

Jones raced down the side of the house with his machine gun. There was something strangely familiar about the giant form on the cot. Jones circled the bed to where he could see the man's face and instantly knew he was looking at Harvey Bailey, a man for whom he had been searching, for months, in connection with the dastardly Kansas City Union Station massacre.

The handcuffs were quickly slipped on the wrists of this much-coveted prize by Lieutenant Will Fritz. Jones made a dash for the back door of the dwelling. He met officers entering from the front. Other officers were approaching the barns and outhouses about the premises.

Fortunately, the only men found at this place were Boss Shannon and his guest, Harvey Bailey, and they were taken so suddenly that not a shot was fired; nor was the slightest disturbance created.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

The large barn on the place proved to be a veritable fortress. Unoccupied at the time, of course, there were signs of recent occupancy, and what signs! It meant only one thing to the experienced officers participating in the raid, and there was more than one sigh of relief when it was searched without casualties. This barn lay about seventy-five yards west of the residence, and from it could be had a commanding view of the house and the road that it was necessary to traverse in order to reach the house. The upper loft was filled with baled hay. Innocent enough! but a minute search revealed a hollowed-out place in the center of the stack of baled hay. This was roofed with 1x12 planks on which rested part of the hay. The opening to this devilishly-designed hiding place directly faced the loft opening.

A person could lie in this place and, without detection by anyone who might actually enter the barn, have a commanding view of the house and the road approaching it. That this place had been long and recently used, was apparent to the officers. Verily, the gods of destiny



## PARADISE LOST

had smiled on them this bright July morning.

A thorough search of the house had produced as other inmates, only Ora Shannon, wife of Boss Shannon, and two fifteen-year old girls. One was the youngest daughter of Boss Shannon by a former marriage; the other was the daughter of Katherine Kelly by one of her many husbands prior to her association with George Kelly.

The northeast room of the house was as different in furnishings and appointments from the balance of the house as was Charles Urschel's home from the shack where he was held prisoner. There was no question concerning whose "hide-out" this room was. Expensive luggage was there. The closets were filled with gowns, exclusive models for women, some of them bearing the trademarks of famous French designers. There were also, smartly tailored suits, of fine materials, for men. This was, truly, an inner sanctum of "Crimes' Paradise."

In the southeast bedroom, the sharp eyes of the searching officers discovered an open trapdoor in the ceiling. A ladder



## CRIMES' PARADISE

was built, on to the wall, leading to the door and the door was gaping plain to the suspicious officers. Jones and Lieutenant Fritz approached the ladder. Immediately against the ladder was a large trunk. On this trunk had been stacked a number of blankets; in the center of this stack was plainly discernible the imprint of a foot.

What was above that ceiling? Had some desperate characters who were known to be associates of the renowned Harvey Bailey, sought concealment in that eery place? Jones ordered Boss Shannon brought into the room.

"Who is in that attic? Don't you lie to us," said Jones.

Shannon was plainly frightened and blurted out, "There is no one up there."

Jones ordered Shannon to start climbing the ladder and, with a machine gun at his back, Shannon was told to put his head through the ceiling and report truthfully everything he might see up there. The man pulled himself through the hole. No shots were fired.

He shouted back, "There is no one here."

## PARADISE LOST

Jones turned to Fritz, "We are no better off than we were before. I wouldn't believe that old buzzard on oath. There is nothing to do but go see for ourselves. Give me a boost to the top of this trunk."

This was said in loud tones so that anyone in the attic could plainly hear, but the experienced Jones placed his hat on the end of the barrel of his machine gun and slowly lifted it through the trap door. This decoy not drawing any fire, Jones then lifted himself through the door. A search proved, beyond a doubt, that the quarters above the ceiling of the house had been recently occupied by rats of the two-legged species and that it was a small edition of the hideout found in the barn.

From appearances, evil-minded persons had been taking advantage of Boss and Ora Shannon, who were loud in proclaiming their innocence and ignorance of the suggestive-looking traps and potential ambushes that were fast being uncovered in their own home.

Even in the sanctity of Ora Shannon's bread box, found in the kitchen over which she presided, reposed a cloth sack

## CRIMES' PARADISE

filled with silver quarters and half dollars to the amount of more than fifty dollars. When confronted with this she assumed an air of complete surprise and indignation. She stoutly and loudly disclaimed any knowledge of this money or how it had found its peculiar resting place. The sensitive ears of Harvey Bailey were absorbing this bit of comedy and Jones, suddenly glancing Bailey's way, surprised a smile lurking in the eyes and on the lips of the usually well-masked countenance. Fresh in the Federal Agent's mind was a bank robbery pulled two days before at Kingfisher, Oklahoma, in true Bailey fashion, and in which a great part of the loot had consisted of silver, in denominations of halves and quarter dollars.

While these interesting developments were taking place inside the house, the officers on the outside, aided by Charles Urschel, who was having the time of his life, had made an important discovery. In the pockets of Harvey Bailey's trousers was found twelve hundred dollars in currency. Seven hundred dollars of this proved to be Charles Urschel's own money, a part of the blood money that

## PARADISE LOST

had been handed over to a bunch of cut-throats in Kansas City in order to obtain his freedom and possibly save his life.

Other disclosures came with the examination of the bills. New money of the Kingfisher, Oklahoma, bank that had just been robbed, glistened from among the used Kansas City Reserve Bank twenty dollar bills. The silver in the Shannon bread box and the Stillwater money from Harvey Bailey's pockets divulged an embarrassing affinity. Agent "Doc" White of El Paso recalled the interesting fact that the leader of the Kingfisher bank robbery had worn a pair of new overalls carrying a bright red trademark plainly visible to the victims of the bank robbery. White came out of the Shannon house dragging just such a pair of overalls. He held them up and asked to whom they belonged. Boss Shannon stared unseeingly at the garment and kept mum. Harvey Bailey remained true to his reputation as a poor conversationalist.

Ora Shannon spoke up. "They are my husband's overalls," she said.

When the interesting overalls were held up for closer inspection, it was quite ap-

parent that Boss, who was about five feet six would have a difficult time attending to his many farm chores, wearing a pair of overalls evidently designed for a man six feet in height and weighing two hundred pounds.

Bailey and Boss Shannon were chained to a post in the rear yard. Ora Shannon was left under guard on the rear porch, loquaciously protesting her innocence. The raid was extended to the home of Shannon's son, Armon, a mile away. This three-room shack was not visible from the Shannon headquarters house and, as there had been no shots fired, the officers were confident that whoever might be at the shack, would be unaware of their presence. The only way the shack could be approached by automobile was to return down the narrow sandy lane, make a right hand turn at an intersection.

Armon Shannon's domicile was in the pasture about three quarters of a mile from the intersection and several hundred yards from the road. No roads from any direction passed any nearer the place. A rough, little-traveled, vehicle road led up to the house, ending abruptly there.

## PARADISE LOST

It was again with the officers a case of "moving in". It was even more difficult to approach than the Boss Shannon house, as any one who might be at the shack could easily see a car, or even a pedestrian, the moment a start was made to approach the shack. Any one at the house would have ample warning of the approach.

Leaving a sufficient guard at the headquarters house, Jones, accompanied by Charles Urschel, two Federal agents, and some police officers "moved in" on the Armon Shannon shack.

No one was there except Armon Shannon, a youth of twenty-three years and his girl wife, Oletha. The young wife was preparing breakfast. Armon was attending chores at the barn. It was quite evident that young Shannon had no knowledge of what had just happened at the paternal homestead. The picture of utter squalor that greeted the gaze of the raiding officers was a sharp contrast to the snug prosperousness found at the home of the boy's father.

The interest Charles Urschel had taken in the kaleidoscopic events at the head-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

quarters house was mild to that shown by him during the busy half hour spent at his old place of imprisonment. He was enthusiastically pointing out to Jones the old well southeast of the house—the corn field in front—the hogs and pigs and calves at the rear—the baby's high chair to which he had been chained, and the old iron bed on which he had been permitted to sleep the two nights that the "big shots" were away collecting the ransom money.

The old round trunk was there—the five-foot bench, and even the small mirror with the crack in the upper left hand corner—everything that he had been able to observe was there. The identification of his place of imprisonment was positive.

When the raid was completed, Jones took Armon Shannon into a wood shed and had a heart-to-heart talk with him. The result of that wood shed conference was a complete confession by young Armon which eventually won for him, from Judge Vaught of the Federal Court at Oklahoma City, a suspended sentence. The confession named George Kelly, son-in-law of Mrs. Shannon, as one of the



## PARADISE LOST

actual abductors of Urschel.

Boss Shannon and Ora Shannon were adamant. They denied any knowledge of the kidnapping, refused to recognize Urschel and claimed that they did not know Bailey.

But the woman, seeing Armon in conversation with a Federal agent, shouted: "Armon, keep your mouth shut, don't tell them a damned thing."

Two days later in the Dallas jail, Boss Shannon faced with irrefutable proof from the statements that Jones had secured from Armon, finally admitted his knowledge and claimed that the gangsters would have killed him had he refused to comply with their wishes.

Mrs. Shannon, mother of Katherine Kelly, shrewdly cunning, held out for days but finally made about the same statement as did her husband.

The personnel of the squad which raided the Shannon farm included Charles Urschel; Federal agents, Jones, Dowd, White and Winsted; Deputy Sheriff Bill Eads of Oklahoma City and Weatherford; Swinney, Schefflett and Carmichael of the Fort Worth police department, and

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Lieutenant Fritz, C. O. Buchanan, and R. L. Jones of the Dallas police department.

As a matter of cooperative courtesy the Federals had phoned Sheriff J. T. Faith of Wise County that they were intending to make an important raid and asked him to join and assist them. The Sheriff failed to join them, a fact which created much comment. In order to get the Sheriff's version of the affair, I addressed to him the following letter:

"Tulsa, Oklahoma  
March 31, 1934

"County Sheriff,  
Wise County,  
Decatur, Texas.

Dear Sheriff:

I am writing a book on the Urschel kidnapping case. I have heard different versions of your failure to assist in the raid on the Shannon farm when Harvey Bailey and others were captured. I hope in my book to give only true facts and do no one an injustice. I should appreciate a letter from you telling me the circumstances surround-

## PARADISE LOST

ing your failure to join the officers in the raid.

"Very respectfully,  
"E. E. Kirkpatrick."

In reply to which, I received the following letter, with permission to publish it in this book:

J. T. FAITH  
SHERIFF OF WISE COUNTY  
Decatur, Texas  
Maarch. the. 2. 34

Slick. Uschel oil Company

Dear Sir

i Received your letter en regard to the Shannon Kidnapping Case Wil say i never Refused to help them it was a minunder Standing they called me from Dallas i am a little hard of hearing i under Stood they wanted me to meat them on the squar en Decatur and they come to Rhome en stead so i dont know who was rong i neaver did refuse to help any officer and never wil as long as i cam sheriff i never had any idea wher they wer going nor what they wanted so i dont see how they can accuse me a beaing a fraid when i never new wher they wer going nor what they wanted me and my best

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Dep. Set hear till Day lite and they never come as soon as i heard they were over ter i took three of my dep. and got with en three miles of them and met them coming out from the Place they come awhile back and got a man come awent through town hear and never ask me to eaven show them the way to wher he lived its my Pollitical Enimies that is putting that new outi Wil send you a sworn Statement that i never new wher they going nor what they wanted and that i never refused to help any officer to arrest any crimmimel since i have ben en office and never expect to if you want to know any thing else that i can i will furnish you gladly do so

J. T. Faith

Yours Truly J, T, Faith

## CHAPTER XIII

### GREEK MEETS GREEK

A colorful chapter in the Urschel case, and one that will bear repetition and elaboration, was the meeting of Gus Jones, ace of the Department of Justice, and America's Number One outlaw—Harvey Bailey.

A quarter of a century in the service of the Government, the youngest member of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders, a man, who, since, has successfully handled many important and dangerous assignments in the service of his country—Gus Jones.

Harvey Bailey, handsome, keen-minded, with the cold nerve of a human lynx, with the ingratiating mannerisms that would enable him to "confidence" his way out of hell. They met at daybreak—that memorable morning, August 12, 1933, in the back yard of Boss Shannon's farm in CRIMES' PARADISE.

Jones' twenty-five years of service as Texas ranger, immigration and customs officer on the Mexican border, and as a Department of Justice agent, had given

## CRIMES' PARADISE

the red-haired Texan, not only a fundamental knowledge of criminal instincts, but an almost supernatural power of divination—better interpreted as hunches.

When the Shannon trap was sprung at daybreak, something seemed to call Jones to that figure on a cot at the rear of the house. In raids like this, Federal agents expect machine-gun fire from any quarter. Jones paid no heed to barns, garages, or other places favorable for an ambush. The Division of Investigation had called him from the hot trail of the Kansas City Union Station massacre mystery to the Urschel case. His subtle senses seemed to whisper to him that he was combining the solution of both shocking mysteries.

Jones approached the cot. America's smartest criminal was wrapped in slumber. America's greatest detective gazed down upon the face of the Nation's prize outlaw. No man could mistake the clear-cut, handsome profile of Harvey Bailey. At the outlaw's side, within easy reach, was a veritable arsenal consisting of a machine gun, a high-powered rifle, and two automatic pistols. His new Ford V-8,

THE KELLYS ARE BROUGHT FROM  
MEMPHIS BY AIRPLANE.



KELLY  
WALKING  
BETWEEN  
SHERIFF  
STANLEY  
ROGERS  
AND U. S.  
MARSHALL  
GEARS.



KATHERINE  
ARRIVES  
FROM  
MEMPHIS  
HAND-  
CUFFED.

KELLY  
LISTENS AS  
WITNESSES  
NAME HIM  
ONE OF  
ACTUAL  
KIDNAPPERS.



KATHERINE  
KELLY  
SMILES AT  
THE JURY.

KATHERINE  
AND  
GEORGE  
CONFER  
WITH THEIR  
ATTORNEY.



GEORGE AND KATHERINE KELLY  
RECEIVE LIFE SENTENCE.

KELLY STARTS  
ON HIS LAST  
RIDE TO  
LEAVENWORTH  
ABOARD AN  
ARMORED CAR,  
HEAVILY  
GUARDED BY FEDERAL OFFICERS.





## GREEK MEETS GREEK

which he had driven into the place shortly after midnight, was parked ten paces away, facing for a quick getaway. Jones reached out with his machine gun and gently rubbed the sleeping Bailey's nose with the muzzle, quickly stepping back several paces.

The eyelids opened—the long heavy eyelashes flickered and the big brown eyes calmly surveyed the situation.

Jones told me later, "Bailey has the most remarkable coordination of mental and muscular control I have ever known."

The natural instinct of any hunted criminal, when suddenly awakened, is to reach for his gun. Bailey had, within reach, a choice assortment of weapons from pistol to machine gun. Jones, no doubt, fervently hoped the bandit would reach for a gun. Bailey had killed a Department-of-Justice agent at Kansas City. He was marked for death by every surviving fellow-officer. Also, too many criminals were having to be re-captured. Lenient and avaricious governors and impecunious jailers were flooding the country with dangerous murderers.

Bailey lay perfectly still. Jones said,

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"Get up Harvey—it's too bad—who's here with you?" The outlaw did not answer. Jones promised, "If a head bobs up around here or a shot is fired, I'll riddle you with machine gun lead."

Bailey slowly replied, "I'm alone. You have me. Well, after all, a fellow has to sleep sometime."

Bailey stretched himself, crossed his feet and threw them over the side of the cot. His hands were motionless. He sensed, of course, that one movement of those hands with the long, tapering fingers meant instant death.

## CHAPTER XIV

### URSCHEL'S HOSTS

Had the family and friends of Urschel known, during the period of his captivity, who some of his abductors were, it would have added no feeling of hopefulness for his return.

On the Shannon farm at different times during Urschel's imprisonment, were Harvey Bailey, George Bates, George Kelly, Bob Brady, and Jim Clark—each wanted for outrages so flagrant and so numerous that the published lists of their crimes were deleted to save space.

Bailey, smartest of all, was suspected in the St. Valentine's Day slaughter in Chicago, in the Kansas City Union Station massacre, and many other crimes. He led the Memorial Day break on May 30, 1933, when he and ten other convicts, escaped from the Lansing prison to spread a reign of terror throughout the Southwest. Bailey had been one of America's most elusive criminals. There was no guessing how many crimes he had committed before the Urschel kidnapping. He

## CRIMES' PARADISE

had been in prison twice in his life before, finally taking the rap in the Urschel case. He made his escape from each prison in which he was incarcerated—the Lansing penitentiary, and the supposedly unbreakable jail at Dallas, Texas, the strongest in the Southwest, where he had been confined for safe keeping until the Urschel trial.

Bailey was arrested by the police at Omaha, Nebraska, on March 23, 1920, for high-jacking. He was released without prosecution. He was afterwards identified as having been leader of the gang which robbed the Lincoln Trust Company of Lincoln, Nebraska, the biggest bank robbery ever pulled in the United States—more than two million dollars in cash and securities having been taken by the robbers.

On the 28th of February, 1930, Thomas Holden and Francis Keating escaped from the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, where they were serving twenty-five year terms for mail robbery. Their escape was affected by the use of forged trusty passes. At the time, George Kelly, serving a term in that institution,

## URSCHEL'S HOSTS

had been assigned to the record room where trusty passes are prepared.

After two years' search by Federal agents and after they had participated in several major bank robberies, Holden and Keating were apprehended on the Old Mission Golf Course at Kansas City, Missouri. Playing with them in the three-some was a tall, good-looking individual who gave the name of J. J. Brown. In this man's pocket was found a liberty bond of large denomination that had been taken in a bank robbery at Fort Scott, Kansas. This person was identified as J. J. Brennan, "Big Tom Brennan," true name, Harvey Bailey, and for the first time Bailey was up against a "rap". He was identified as the leader of the Fort Scott robbery, tried, convicted and sentenced to ten to fifty years in the Kansas State Penitentiary at Lansing. He was taken immediately to the penitentiary and not returned to jail. Probably a good idea, as a search of his jail cell disclosed a hidden automatic pistol.

Albert L. Bates had many aliases, including George Bates, George L. Davis, George Harris, J. B. King and others. As

## CRIMES' PARADISE

J. B. King he was received at the State penitentiary at Carson City, Nevada, on March 28, 1916, with a sentence of one to fifteen years for burglary. He was paroled on the 13th of November, 1917. As Albert L. Bates, he was arrested by the police at Salt Lake City, and given six months in jail for petty theft. As George Davis, he was arrested by the Sheriff at Ogden, Utah, on April 22, 1920, for burglary. He was placed in the State penitentiary on the 3rd of August, 1921, but escaped on the 27th of October, 1926. As A. L. Bates, he was received in the Colorado State penitentiary, Canyon City, on the 10th of May, 1927, with a sentence of three to five years for burglary. He was discharged on the 15th of July, 1930. As A. L. Bates, he was arrested by the State police at Paw-paw, Michigan, on a minor offense and given thirty days in jail. At the time of his arrest in the Urschel case, he was wanted at Lincoln, Nebraska; Colfax, Washington; Denton, Texas, and Wheaton, Illinois, for bank robberies.

When arrested in Denver on the Urschel kidnapping charge, Bates was quiz-

## URSCHEL'S HOSTS

zed by Capt. Wm. J. Armstrong of the Denver Detective Bureau, concerning the murder of two of his associates in a safe robbery in 1926. The victims were J. E. "Mike" Conway and Frank "Frisco Whitey" Carroll. Conway was killed in the desert west of Grand Junction, Colorado; Carroll in a Leadville rooming house. The Denver police say the men quarreled over the division of three hundred dollars taken from the safe in the robbery.

George Kelly Barnes, alias "Machine Gun Kelly", alias R. G. Shannon, etc., started his crime career as a hip-pocket bootlegger. His criminal records show that he was received in the State Penitentiary at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on the 14th of March, 1927, for violation of the prohibition law. As George Kelly, he was arrested by the Tulsa Police on the 24th day of July, 1927, on a vagrancy charge. He was also arrested in Tulsa on the 13th of January, 1928, on a prohibition charge. As George Kelly, he was received at the Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary on the 11th day of February, 1928, with a three-year sentence from Federal Judge



## CRIMES' PARADISE

Kenamer of Tulsa for introducing liquor into the Indian Reservation. Here he was graduated into big-time company. At the time of his arrest in the Urschel case he was being sought for many bank robberies, especially the ones at Colfax, Washington; Denton, Texas; and Tupelo, Mississippi.

All three of these characters were classed among the most desperate outlaws of the time. Bailey's career, with his intelligence and daring, was without a parallel since the days of Jesse James. No one of the three would hesitate an instant at murdering a victim if expediency demanded.

## CHAPTER XV

### MONEY MELTS STEEL BARS

On August 14th, the Denver police arrested George Davis, alias Albert Bates, on suspicion of passing stolen Express Company checks. This constitutes one of the secret chapters in the Urschel kidnapping case and will make interesting reading in subsequent pages. Bates was at once identified as one of the Urschel kidnapers.

It was known from Armon Shannon's confession, that Bates and George Kelly were the two men who interrupted the bridge game in the Urschel home and carried away Charles Urschel.

Washington was highly elated at the results of the Shannon farm raid and especially at the apprehension of Bailey, who had been catalogued the brains of the Kansas City Union Station massacre. The arrest of Bates was, also, most gratifying.

The suspects captured on the Shannon farm had been immediately hurried to the escape-proof jail at Dallas.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Gangdom sent sinister threats that Bates and Bailey would be rescued. The Dallas papers wrote columns about the impregnability of the Dallas County jail, and statements came from local officers as to the impossibility of such a rescue taking place.

The Dallas News of August the 18th, carried the following story:

"Seven Barred Doors or Grills Face Gangsters if They Try to Spring Bailey from Jail.

"There's a reason for the calmness with which Sheriff Smoot Schmid and his deputies greet the recurring rumors that an attempt will be made to liberate Harvey Bailey, held in county jail in default of \$100,000 bond in the kidnapping of C. F. Urshel of Oklahoma City.

"If a gang of Gangsters or a mob of mobsters undertook to free the kidnapping suspect, here's what they would encounter:—

"On the first floor they would have to fight their way through the lobby of the Criminal Courts Building to reach the heavy door that gives into the outer lobby of the jail. Similar diffi-

## MONEY MELTS STEEL BARS

culty would be encountered if they approached from the rear through the alley at the entrance of which is a high, barred gate.

"If they succeeded in reaching the door they would have to crash it and then fight their way another fifteen feet to reach the ceiling-to-floor heavy steel grill into the main lobby of the jail. Then they would have to crash that door and fight their way to another door into the elevator corridor.

"Should they succeed in riding the elevator to the floor where the prisoner is held, then they would face another ceiling-high grill of heavy steel bars. Still between the raiders and the cell block would be a barred door. Passing this door there would yet be between them and their quarry the heavy bars surrounding the corridor, and inside the corridor, the cell door itself.

"Thus any raiding gang would have to make its way against armed officers across many feet of floor space and seven barred doors of heavy steel grills set in concrete and reaching from ceiling to floor.

"There have been a few jail breaks from the Dallas County jail, but there is none on record where a mob succeeded in storming the jail. Those who

## CRIMES' PARADISE

have escaped have done it through trickery, and the officers are keeping a close watch on Bailey to avoid any such turn of events.

"That's the reason Sheriff Schmid and his deputies go about their business calmly, with no fear their jail will be broken into."

On Labor Day, September 4th, every broadcasting station in the country screamed the announcement that America's Number One criminal, Harvey Bailey, had walked out of the escape-proof jail at Dallas, taking with him the Jailer Nick Tresp as hostage.

Imagine what the Urschel family and friends thought. Kelly and Bates had boasted they were stronger than the United States Government. The Federal agents had placed Bailey in the strongest jail in the Southwest, and he had walked out without a shot being fired and was fleeing to some hideout, in a car belonging to an officer. Small wonder that the Urschel organization had doubts for a while that the Government would protect them.

Gus Jones was in his room at the

## MONEY MELTS STEEL BARS

Baker Hotel in Dallas, getting some much needed sleep, when the news was flashed that Bailey had escaped. That human blood-hound stepped into his car with a machine gun, and, accompanied by Lieut. Will Fritz and his able Homicide Squad of the Dallas Police Department, headed directly for a hideout in Oklahoma to which he knew Bailey would flee. Jones and his party were just twenty minutes behind Bailey when the officers at Ardmore, Oklahoma, captured the notorious outlaw without firing a shot. Had Jones overtaken Bailey before the capture, he, undoubtedly, would have ended forever, the chances for another escape.

Harvey Bailey had been placed in an isolated cell in the block of the eighth floor of the Dallas County Jail. The cell block was used only to house condemned prisoners. Bailey was the only occupant of this cell block. He was the only prisoner on the eighth floor of the jail. A solid steel door must be passed to enter that floor. A steel-barred door must be passed to enter the steel cell block, and last was the steel door to the very cell he occupied.

To the layman this would seem an im-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

pregnable place and a proper one in which to house this dangerous man. Furthermore, the Government had been assured that it would be unnecessary to maintain their own guards over this man.

Bailey had been at first booked by Gus Jones as "Bill Jones" and the identity of the prisoner kept secret for two days, from all except Sheriff Schmid and the head jailer, who knew his identity from the very first. On August 14th, however, the whole world knew that the Dallas County jail housed the greatest catch of the century.

After the escape, it was apparent to the Federal agents that an inside job had been put over. Painstaking work by the Department-of-Justice agents proved that while the bars to Bailey's cell doors were sawed and he was concealed in an adjoining cell where he took the day jailer prisoner at the point of the smuggled revolver, a minute examination of these bars later showed that they had been sawed from the outside. More damaging still was the imprint of the teeth of a Stilson wrench, showing the sawed portions of



## MONEY MELTS STEEL BARS

the bar had been twisted loose with that kind of an instrument.

A wrench, fitting the marks, was found in a drawer of the desk of Tom L. Manion, the night jailer, who had, for the promise of \$10,000, been confided in to aiding this desperate man. The break was to occur, of course, just after the night jailer had gone off duty. The gun was to be used to subdue the day jailer, whose duty it was to enter the cell block for the purpose of giving Bailey his breakfast.

That lynx-eyed individual was secreted in the cell adjoining the one which he was supposed to be occupying. He stepped out and rammed a gun barrel into the back of the jailer, relieved him of his keys, locked him and the trusty in the cell block.

Harvey Bailey, then, quietly and confidently, made his way down stairs to the sixth floor where he stepped into the office of the turnkey on duty there, and repeated the same performance as on the eighth floor. He then forced a trusty to operate the elevator and take him to the ground floor. Here the booking clerk,

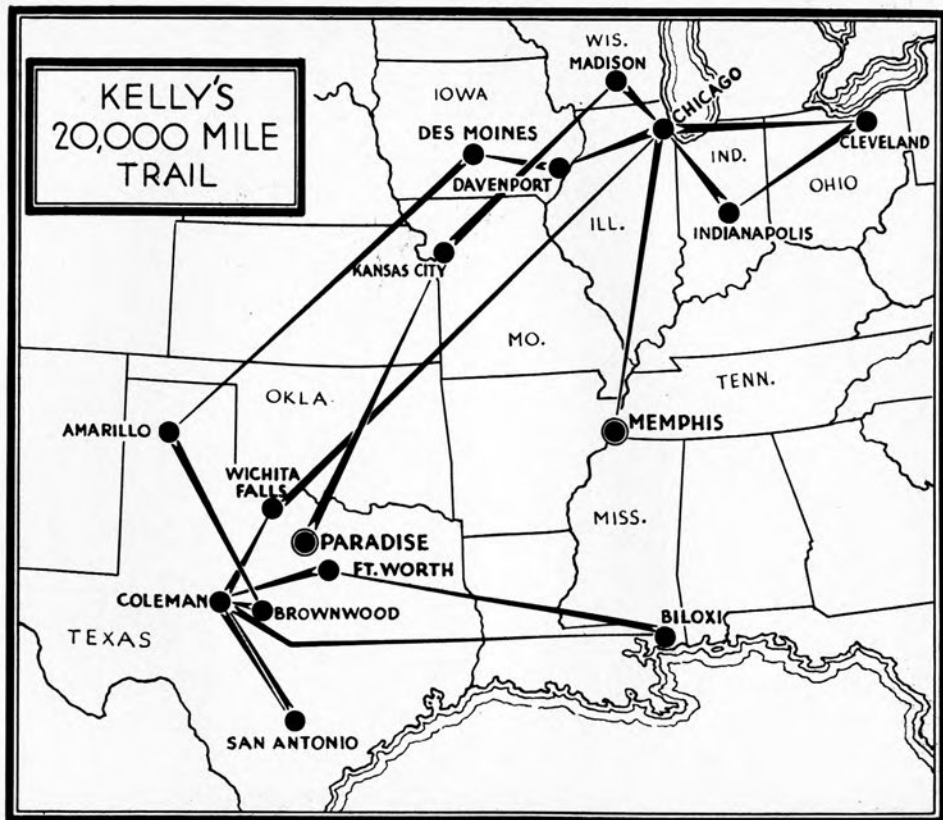
## CRIMES' PARADISE

busy checking the night records, heard a stern command, "Stick 'em up," and looked into the muzzle of a revolver behind which were two hard brown eyes. He was immediately relieved of the key to the outer door and, with a revolver against his back, accompanied Harvey Bailey from the escape-proof Dallas jail. He was forced to disclose the whereabouts of his own car which was parked across the street, and, with Bailey at the wheel, began one of the wildest rides he had ever experienced.

Again the gods of destiny rode with Gus Jones and against America's bad man. Rain had been falling intermittently for several days and the by-roads were almost impassable, forcing Bailey, in his flight, to keep to the main highways.

With the air of freedom again filling his lungs, the resourceful outlaw headed straight for Oklahoma and succeeded in reaching Ardmore, where the alert Chief of Police, Hale Dunn, and members of his force, had prepared a trap. They were able to take Bailey into custody after chasing him several miles through the streets, and, finally, forcing him to over-

George and Katherine Kelly in their desperate efforts to shake off the Federal sleuths, raced, hid and back-tracked over a 20,000 mile trail. The Department of Justice Agents were never more than three days and sometimes less than three hours behind them finally capturing the pair at Memphis, Tenn. and on the same day digging up \$73,250.00 ransom money which the pair had buried near Coleman, Texas.



## MONEY MELTS STEEL BARS

turn his commandeered car.

Jones and the Dallas officers drove in to Ardmore a few moments later. Federal officers arrived from Oklahoma City and it was decided to move Bailey immediately to the jail at Oklahoma City. The heavily guarded prisoner arrived at that place late in the evening and was placed in the same cell block with Boss and Armon Shannon, where he was later joined by Albert Bates, who had been brought from Denver by airplane.

The Federal authorities, with the whole-hearted cooperation of Sheriff Stanley Rogers, placed a twenty-four hour shift of special agents, armed with machine guns and tear gas bombs, over the prisoners. Uncle Sam had now determined that all of these individuals should face a Federal Judge and a jury.

The Federal Division of Investigation made an immediate and thorough investigation which disclosed that the hacksaws and revolver used in Bailey's escape were smuggled to him by Thomas L. Manion, a Deputy Sheriff and a jailer at the Dallas County jail, and that one Grover C. Bevill of Dallas, Texas, had

## CRIMES' PARADISE

purchased the hacksaws and had assisted Manion in making it possible for Bailey to escape.

For this offense Manion and Bevill were indicted at Dallas on September 25, 1933. They were tried and convicted on October 5th. Manion was sentenced on October 7th to pay a fine of \$10,000.00 and to serve two years in the United States penitentiary at Leavenworth. Bevill was sentenced to serve fourteen months in the same institution.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THREATS AND GUTS

On August 23, a Federal Grand Jury at Oklahoma City indicted fourteen persons for the kidnapping of Charles F. Urschel. The persons named were:

Mrs. Ora Shannon, R. G. Shannon, Armon Shannon, Harvey Bailey, Albert L. Bates, George Kelly, Katherine Thorne Kelly, Isadore Blumenfeld, Sam Kronick, Clifford Skelly, Pete Valder, Barney Berman, Sam Krozberg, and Charles Wolk.

On the morning of September 18, 1933, in Oklahoma City, in the court room of Judge Edgar S. Vaught, United States Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, opened an epochal and one of the most dramatic trials in criminal court history. Judge Vaught, whose dignified poise and clear-cut, fundamentally-sound rulings, interpreting for the first time the far-reaching ramifications of the "Lindbergh Kidnapping Law", attracted nationwide attention and approbation. He has since been seriously urged as a fitting

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member of the United States Supreme Court.

It is difficult to describe correctly the tenseness of the atmosphere surrounding that court room each day. Gangland daily sent threats that it would rescue the accused kidnappers, and would annihilate, by bombs from airplanes, or otherwise, all those connected with the prosecution of the criminals.

Every person who entered that court room was thoroughly searched and had to pass a battery of machine gunners, guards and inquisitive watchmen at the head of every stairway. Prisoners and jurymen were brought to the courtroom floor in private elevators, heavily guarded.

To give you a true flash of the situation, I herewith reproduce a column from the "Oklahoma News" of September 18th, penned by that graphic news-hawk, Noel Houston:—

"An aged bailiff in a loosely hung blue suit pokes around the high ceilinged court room. He is a stage-setter. He arranges chairs, pushes this table over slightly, shoves that one.



## THREATS AND GUTS

Soon, on this big empty stage a stirring drama will unfold.

"Through the panes of the swinging doors, guards with machine guns slung over their arms, may be seen patrolling the lobby.

"The rear doors swing open. A parade of 135 men, good and true, enter. They sit on spectator's benches. This is the jury panel. From their ranks, twelve will be chosen.

"The bailiff looks at his watch. Nine o'clock. An hour yet. He spies a venireman in shirt sleeves. That's against the rules. The venireman hurriedly dons the coat which he has been carrying slung over his arm.

"The jurymen mop perspiration. It is very hot and still. Down the corridor outside walks Judge Vaught. A body-guard behind him. Judge Vaught usually smiles. He has a serious mien now. Here comes the photographers. They set up cameras. Newspaper men drift in. They lounge at the long press table.

"Defense lawyers enter and sit at their table. They confer in whispers. Seven men smartly attired, Germans and Jews, file in and take a row of chairs beside the counsel table. These are the St. Paul defendants. They are accused of trying to pass part of the

## CRIMES' PARADISE

ransom money.

"A blinding flash. Then more blinding flashes. The photographers are at work. The Shannons, husband and wife and son, take their places at the counsel table. They are silent. Mrs. Shannon isn't wearing her horn-rimmed spectacles today.

"A stir comes at 9:30. The swinging doors at the rear have swung open. Here comes the hero of the trial, big, smiling Charles F. Urschel. On either side of him are E. E. Kirkpatrick—he paid the ransom—and Arthur Seeligson, the family spokesman during the negotiations. Mrs. Urschel is accompanied by her mother, Mrs. J. A. Frates, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, who has been her constant companion and a Gibraltar of sustaining strength to the daughter since the first moment the shocking tragedy struck. They get front row seats. Close behind are Tom Slick, Jr. and a determined-looking man who must be a bodyguard.

"The St. Paul defendants nudge each other. "That's Urschel." The jurymen hear the remark. They gaze too.

"Through the left door comes the pride of Uncle Sam—a half dozen alert, keen-eyed prosecutors. Herbert K. Hyde, district attorney, is in the lead,

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and close behind, Jim Brown, famous Federal officer in the Indian Division. He's playing personal bodyguard to Hyde.

"There is Joseph B. Keenan from Washington. Urschel gets to his feet and shakes hand with him. More flash-light pictures are taken.

"It is 9:59. The tenseness increases. The curtain is to go up in a minute. So far, Harvey J. Bailey and Albert Bates have not appeared. Everyone is awaiting them. Eyes are trained on the door.

"The heavy oak door behind the bench comes open. Judge Vaught enters. He is smiling now. Everyone stands up. "Hear ye, hear ye," begins the bailiff. When he is through everybody sits down again.

"The cameras swing toward the door at the right. The doors open. There stand Harvey Bailey and Albert Bates. They are handcuffed together. Behind them are a half-dozen clean-cut young men. They are graduate law students. They are something else—Department of Justice agents. Under their coats are guns. Bailey creates a sensation. Heretofore he has been seen only in disreputable coveralls or dirty underwear. Now he has suddenly blossomed

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forth as a fashion plate. He wears a double-breasted gray suit. A black tie is loosely knotted at his soft collar. His shock of black hair, beginning to gray, is newly cut. Most radical change of all, he is very clean.

"Bates doesn't wear a coat. The bailiff doesn't reprimand him. But it's against the rules. The two men are kept standing in the doorway while the roll of veniremen is called. Each one answers "here". Each arises and remains standing. They all raise their right hands. They take the oath.

"A venireman asked to be excused. He is an undertaker. 'You may go, we don't need an undertaker yet,' says the judge. Bailey and Bates laugh as loud as everybody else.

"They are taking the handcuffs off Bailey and Bates. They sit down with their lawyers. They don't look at the Shannons or the St. Paul defendants.

"At 10:20 o'clock the clerk shakes a wooden box full of names and draws out twelve. As their names are called the twelve file to the jury box.

"The questions go on in monotone. The veniremen on the spectators' benches listen intently. Urschel is keenly interested. Newspapermen are writing notes at a fast pace. Telegraph mes-

## THREATS AND GUTS

senger boys slip in and out bearing newspaper copy. The click of typewriters and telegraph instruments comes from the press room across the hall.

"It is 12:00 o'clock. Time for lunch. Judge Vaught recesses court. The Federal agents get up from the bench behind Bailey and Bates. The handcuffs are snapped on. They are led from the room. The jury files out. The judge leaves the bench. Attorneys rise and stand in groups discussing the various jurors in the box.

"The first half day is over."

"So on with the show."

Probably no other court room scene in the history of American jurisprudence, since the trial of Aaron Burr, has held more breathless interest or sustained drama, gripping the defendants, the prosecution, and the court attaches alike, with a tenseness that suggested the imminence of explosives.

When the court room doors opened at 8:30 a. m., about 150 women were already gathered. They fought and shoved their way to the available seats. Two women were slightly hurt in the rush and the dresses of several were torn. More

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than 100 women, packed together, were standing in the rear of the court room and overflowed the corridor.

Many spectators brought their lunch and stayed in the court room to retain their seats. Ideas like that spread, and soon all the audience was doing it. One day, three young ladies, each had a thermos bottle of hot coffee, which they sipped to restore their nerves during particularly exciting bits of testimony.

On the morning of August 19th, when that dynamic prosecutor, Herbert K. Hyde, in his adept and compelling questioning of witnesses, had the crowded court room in such a state of animated suspense, that a sneeze would have started a riot, an airplane roared ominously over the Federal building. For an instant there was a tautness and the tenseness that obtains in a herd of long-horned, Texas steers, grouped protectively together during an electrical storm, when the slightest reverberation might start an uncontrollable stampede.

The drone of the plane faded and an audible sigh of relief filled the court room. Every man and woman in the

## THREATS AND GUTS

building who heard that airplane motor's hum credited Katherine and George Kelly with the nerve to carry out their nation-wide, broadcasted death threats.

Frequently during the trial, a messenger would appear in the court room. Keenan, Hyde, Judge Vaught, Urschel, or others would be handed a message or letter. Court proceedings would continue without interruption, but, within a few moments these principals, with the exception of Judge Vaught, would silently ease out of the court room. A conference would be held in an adjoining office. A pen-and-ink written letter, finger-printed by Geo. Kelly, but written by Katherine, would be read and discussed.

In the annals of American criminology there have never been penned more clever, more vicious nor more dastardly epistles than those which came, throughout the trial, to the Urschel family, to Attorney General Keenan, to Herbert Hyde, and to Judge Edgar Vaught. Every sentence breathed death and destruction. Every paragraph carried guaranteed threats that Urschel, his family and friends would be



## CRIMES' PARADISE

exterminated if they testified against the Shannon family.

In a letter to Attorney General Keenan, postmarked Chicago, August 18, 1933, Katherine Kelly wrote:—

"The entire Urschel family and friends, and all of you will be exterminated soon. There is no way I can prevent it. I will gladly put George Kelly on the spot for you if you will save my mother, who is innocent of any wrong doing. If you do not comply with this request, there is no way in which I can prevent the most awful tragedy. If you refuse my offer I shall commit some minor offense and be placed in jail so that you will know I have no connection with the terrible slaughter that will take place in Oklahoma City, within the next few days."

We called Urschel into the anteroom to read this threat. He went quietly back to the court room, and within ten minutes walked to the witness chair and gave his testimony. A testimony incriminating every member of the gang, including the Shannon family. He showed not the slightest fear. His well-modulated voice

## THREATS AND GUTS

displayed no malice or vindictiveness, but he hesitated at no point, nor omitted any detail which would convict the writer of that malign letter, and her family.

On September 19th, an air-mail letter was received at the Urschel home addressed to Charles F. Urschel, bearing a Chicago date line. The letter was signed "George R. Kelly," and bore fingerprints which Kelly claimed were his, and which the Federal agents immediately verified as genuine. The letter follows:

"Ignorant Charles:

"Just a few lines to let you know that I am getting my plans laid to destroy your so-called mansion, and you and your family immediately after this trial. And young fellow I guess you've begun to realize your serious mistake. Are you ignorant enough to think the Government can guard you forever. I gave you credit for more sense than that, and figured you thought too much of your family to jeopardize them as you have, but if you don't look out for them why should we. I dislike hurting the innocent, but I told you exactly what would happen and you can bet \$200,000.00 more everything I said will

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be true. You are living on borrowed time now. You know that the Shannon family are victims of circumstances the same as you was. You don't seem to mind prosecuting the innocent, neither will I have any conscious qualms over brutally murdering your family. The Shannons have put the heat on, but I don't desire to see them prosecuted as they are innocent and I have a much better method of settling with them. As far as the guilty being punished you would probably have lived the rest of your life in peace had you tried only the guilty, but if the Shannons are convicted look out, and God help you for he is the only one that will be able to do you any good. In the event of my arrest I've already formed an outfit to take care of and destroy you and yours the same as if I was there. I am spend-your money to have you and your family killed—nice—eh! You are bucking people that have cash—planes, bombs and unlimited connection both here and abroad. I have friends in Oklahoma City that know every move and every plan you make, and you are still too dumb to figure out the finger man there.

"If my brain was no larger than yours, the government would have had

## THREATS AND GUTS

me long ago, as it is I am drinking good beer and will yet see you and your family like I should have left you at first—stone-dead.

"I don't worry about Bates and Bailey. They will be out for the ceremonies—your slaughter.

"Now say—it is up to you; if the Shannons are convicted, you can get another rich wife in hell, because that will be the only place you can use one.

"Adios, smart one.

"Your worst enemy,

Geo. R. Kelly

"I will put my finger prints below so you can't say some crank wrote this."

(Kelly's finger prints were inserted here).

"Give Keenan my regards and tell him maybe he would like to meet the owner of the above.

"See you in hell."

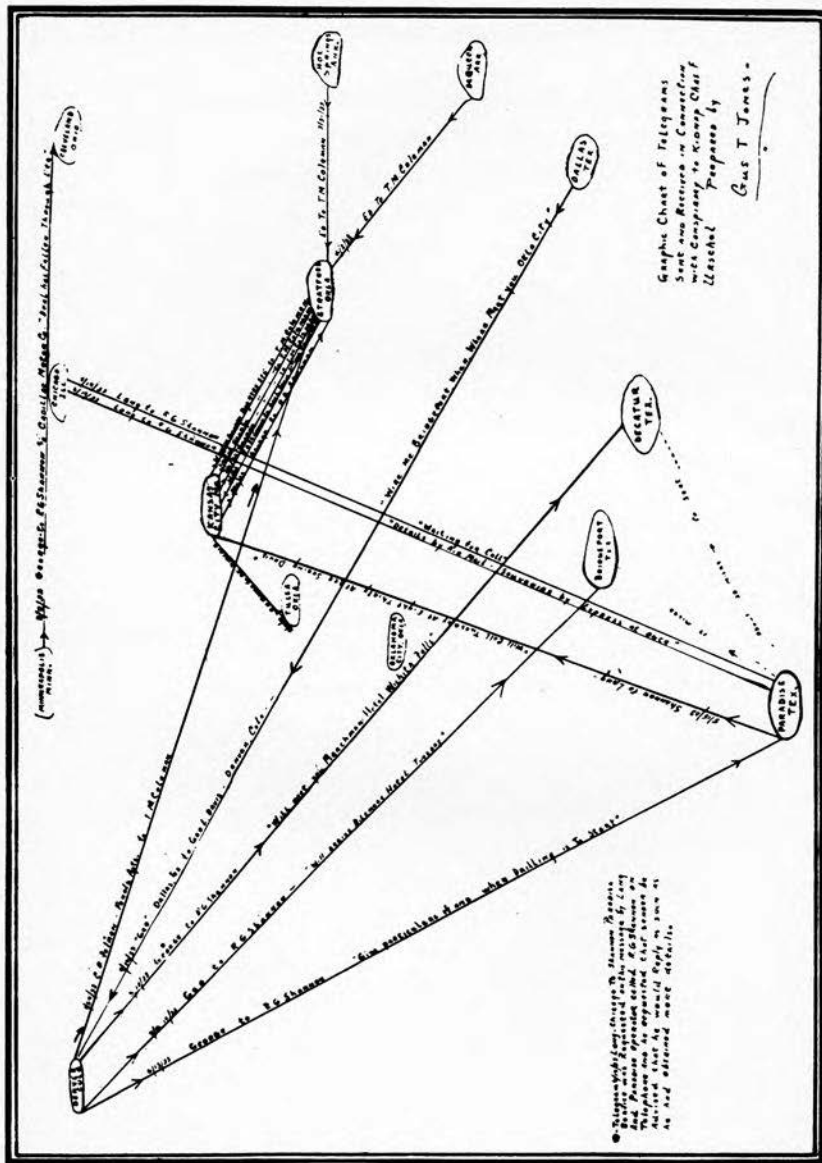
Urschel was to appear on the witness stand the next day. Throughout his examination and cross-examination he was just Charles Urschel, the man who, to my mind, rendered the greatest service to his country of any American in the year 1933.

During Urschel's captivity on the Shan-

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non farm, blindfolded, manacled, chained, and fed on dry sandwiches, gangdom had concentrated its best talents on intimidating the victim. In the course of the conversation one day, Kelly said to his helpless prisoner:—

“If we thought you would ever see anything here, or ever tell anything when you go back, we would kill you now. That really is the safest way, but if we take your word, and release you after the ransom money is paid, and you betray us by giving the Federals any information, we will choose our own methods of punishing you. I think the best method of punishment is the Chinese bandit system. They take a victim, strip him of his clothes, place him face downward on a board floor in some old shack where numerous wharf rats are extremely hungry. A hole is bored in the floor immediately under the victim's belly, the hungry rats begin nibbling through the hole in the floor, and slowly but surely eat the lining of the belly and pull out the intestines. The process takes days and the victim has time to repent his error.”



## CHAPTER XVII

### LAWYERS

On the second morning after the Urschel kidnapping had stunned the citizenship of the United States, and had caused a roaring wave of indignation, a prominent Oklahoma lawyer entered the office of a representative of the Federal Government and closed the door behind him. His demeanor showed great perturbation and nervousness. The Federal man, not only able and astute, but a deep student of human nature, instantly sensed important happenings. The lawyer, after attempting to pledge the United States representative to secrecy, suddenly blurted out this startling statement:—

“I want to put myself on record as having no connection—nothing to do with the Urschel kidnapping.”

Imagine the Government man's surprise! Here was a lawyer prominent for years in Oklahoma. Like a flash out of a blue sky, he had rushed to the United States Government to disclaim any connection with the most dastardly crime of

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the century. The Federal man masked his amazement and asked for details. The story which that lawyer told, in his anxiety and burning desire to let the Federal authorities know he was guilty of no complicity in the kidnapping, constitutes a semi-secret chapter in the annals of moonshine barratry in Oklahoma, which goes far to vindicate the popular opinion of Oklahoma citizenship that the Bar Association of that state, in its puny gestures to rid itself of crooked, shyster and degenerate members, has never scratched the surface.

"Just what," asked the Government man, "is the burden of your song?"

"It's just this," said the agitated attorney. "Several years ago a crooked deal was put over on the Slick interests in a law suit. A large amount of money was filched from Tom Slick. I was in on the law suit but had nothing to do with the crooked part. At that time a suggestion was made that Tom Slick be kidnapped for ransom. Nothing came of it and Mr. Slick died shortly after. I don't know who is responsible for this Urschel kidnapping, but in view of the things that occurred



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then and which I have correctly related to you now, I want to place myself on record as coming clean about the past event."

George Kelly told Urschel during the days spent in the shack on the Shannon farm:—

"We knew every detail of your home and office. We had you perfectly 'fingered'."

Katherine and George Kelly subsequently, in vicious, threatening letters written to Urschel, in a desperate attempt to intimidate him and prevent his testifying on the witness stand, said:

"You are so damn dumb that you haven't yet figured out the 'finger man' there in Oklahoma City."

In the Oklahoma News of September 18th, Joseph B. Keenan, Assistant United States Attorney General, sent from Washington by President Roosevelt, to assist in the prosecution of the Urschel kidnappers, hurled a defy and, in effect, an ultimatum, that any defense lawyer who became tainted with ransom money would be classed on the same level with the actual kidnappers and would be prosecuted as an accessory after the fact to the

full extent of the Government's ability. Mr. Keenan's ultimatum read:—

"It makes no difference whether they receive the same money paid by Charles F. Urschel to effect his release, or receive transferred or 'washed' money. No profession will be exempt from the Government's program to stamp out racketeering and allied crimes. It may be that lawyers, with their knowledge of what constitutes knowingly receiving such money, will find themselves particularly vulnerable."

Mr. Keenan made no charge that the attorneys had received or expected to receive any of the ransom money as fees.

He further said,

"The Government's notice extends not only to lawyers, but to bondsmen, fixers and anybody else who comes to the support of the kidnappers. The Government is not going into this just temporarily; a comprehensive plan has been drawn but we know the battle will be long drawn out."

During the kidnapping trial, one of the defense lawyers called me to one side and said—

"You should not feel vindictive nor

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bitter toward me. I'll tell you a secret. You and the entire Urschel family would have been wiped out had it not been for me. My clients had purchased the explosives with which to blow up the Urschel home and I persuaded them to forego their desperate inclinations."

This threat had been made and the lawyer had used his wonderfully persuasive powers on his clients many weeks before his enlightening disclosure to me. In the interim his clients were roaming half the states of the Union with every Governmental agency bent on their apprehension, with almost every mail carrying deadly and vicious threats to exterminate not only the Urschel family, but those of United States Assistant Attorney General, Joseph B. Keenan, United States District Attorney, Herbert K. Hyde, and there is a probability that they even wrote the letter which threatened the life of that able jurist, Judge Vaught, who was presiding in the case.

Shades of Blackstone! What constitutes ethics in the legal profession? How far will a lawyer stifle his conscience and debauch his citizenship for a fee? In Okla-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

homa there is a law providing for the sterilization of habitual criminals. The thought is absurd, of course, but it has occurred to me if this statute could in some way be extended to apply to unconvicted but habitually crooked lawyers throughout the nation, a great approach would be made to the ultimate extinction of crime.

The Urschel kidnapping case is not closed. The Federal Government and its Division of Investigation has certain information that will forever keep the case open until all concerned with it are exposed and punished. The Division of Investigation never closes a case until it is completely solved. It is kept on the active list year in and year out.

George and Katherine Kelly, Bates, Bailey and Ora Shannon are in solitary confinement. Life in that state becomes irksome—dull. Some day one or more of them may talk. Anything they tell will, of necessity, have to be verified by convincing facts before the Government takes action, but stranger things have happened. J. Edgar Hoover has an army of intelligent, resourceful, highly trained investi-

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gators, sleeplessly camping along dim trails of crime that quickly pass from the public mind.

If, when, and as the announcement comes out of Washington naming the "finger man" or men in the Urschel kidnapping case, I predict a sensation which will tempt those excellent newspapers of Oklahoma to carry front page headlines rivalling the best efforts of the late Bon-fils of the Denver Post.

I intend no insinuation, innuendo, nor reflection on any defense lawyer in the Urschel case.

I probably have more friends in the legal profession than any other, unless it be the newspaper fraternity. My only brother is a lawyer. The legal profession holds top rank among members of Congress. Sixty-eight of the ninety-eight Senators and two hundred and fifty-one of the four hundred and thirty-five Representatives, practice law before the bar. They write the laws, and then they, many of them, help criminals find a way to defeat those laws.

The American Bar Association and many State Bar Associations, adopt high

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sounding resolutions condemning their errant members, but practically nothing is done to correct the nauseating evil.

Usually the desperate criminal has only one means of communication with his outside comrades of gangland—through his lawyer.

America wrote her laws giving the criminal every safeguard. The burden of proof is always on the Government. If a gangster is apprehended and placed in jail, a lawyer immediately appears. Suppose the gangster says to his attorney, "Get word to John and George to terrify the witnesses who are to testify. Tell them to go the limit, even if they have to drop an occasional bomb."

Or, suppose he instructs his attorney, "Tell Albert and Bob to drive to a house ten miles west of a certain city and destroy certain evidence in this case."

The lawyer has been paid an unusual fee.

What, dear reader, is your opinion as to subsequent events?

The medical profession meticulously checks its lanes of trade and deals swift and severe punishment to abortionists and

## LAWYERS

quacks.

The legal profession, in its relations toward crooked members and their expulsions, assume more or less the attitude of "let George do it." This opinion among laymen has become so prevalent that the accompanying thought occurs, that a certain element of cowardice among upright lawyers, fearing reprisals or vengeance in some form, from exposed fellow bar members, deters them from performing a great patriotic service.

Next in importance in the fight on crime, is the deplorable use of the unlimited pardoning power of State Governors.

When a member of the Urschel organization, immediately after Urschel's return from captivity, expressed doubt concerning the solving of the crime and the capture of the abductors, Gus Jones said, "They're not smart, we've probably caught them several times, and through the modern easy jailbreaks and pardoning governors, they are out again."

I intended in these pages to give some detailed statistics about the clemency of governors in each state of the Union. I quickly learned the task would be monu-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

mental. I mention herewith only two instances which will convey a thought that should worry every taxpayer.

Every criminal convicted costs every taxpayer money. The cost of apprehending and convicting criminals reaches colossal figures. You don't see it on your tax receipt, but it is one of the principal items comprising the total. Our silly laws permit a governor to set aside any jury verdict and turn back upon the tax-paying public, any criminal who has the proper credentials of approach, or the persuasive powers of language capable of accomplishing the desired end.

On May 4, 1934, I wired the Fort Worth Star Telegram, requesting data on the approximate number of pardons or other clemencies granted under the "Ma Ferguson" regimes in Texas. The Star Telegram referred me to their able staff correspondent at the State Capitol, at Austin, Texas. On May 5, 1934, I received the following message:—

"E. E. Kirkpatrick,  
Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Present Ferguson administration to



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date has granted 1,570 full pardons conditional pardons and general paroles but all three amount to the same thing—prisoner getting permanent release. In Ma Ferguson's previous administration between 3,000 and 4,000 received clemencies and at present rate about 3,000 will receive clemencies by time term expires. The above does not include furloughs of which there are hundreds. In addition, the Governor has commuted several long sentences so that prisoners get their release under good behavior regulations.

(signed) Byron C. Utecht."

I am a native and a resident of Texas. I voted for "Ma" Ferguson. Not because I was particularly impressed with her husband's talents, but I was tired of the "Bishop Cannons," "Tom Loves," and other sanctimonious politicians, who had for a decade been attempting to write the rules of every private citizen's daily conduct.

Residents of other states have, on numerous occasions, inquired of me why we keep electing the Fergusons in Texas. The absolute answer which has been abundantly substantiated by votes in over-

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whelming majorities in state elections, is contained in the brief lines above.

From Walter Biscup, of the Tulsa World, recognized in newspaper circles as the foremost authority on crime in the Southwest, I gleaned this startling information:—

Governor "Alfalfa Bill" Murray, up to the last tabulation on October 25, 1933, had granted acts of clemency in the number of eighteen hundred and thirty-four (1834). No tabulation has since been attempted.

Personally, I admire "Bill" Murray. He unquestionably saved the staggering oil industry at one time by his courageous and unprecedented action.

But Biscup's undisputed statistics revealed the astounding and almost unbelievable fact, that Governor Murray has extended clemency to nineteen (19) persons convicted of the crime of murder from one county alone in Oklahoma—Tulsa County.

One of these persons shown leniency by the Oklahoma Governor, had been tried for murder in six cases, securing an acquittal in four of the cases. Two of the above,

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Bob (Doc) Barker, paroled by Murray September 3, 1932, and Volney Davis, are now being sought by the Federal Government in connection with both the Bremer and Hamm kidnapping cases.

Governor Murray's edict of banishment from the State, of noted outlaws receiving clemency, has brought down upon him wide-spread and caustic comment from law enforcement officers of other states, but Governor Murray, apparently, is unconcerned about the troubles of other states. He loves Oklahoma!

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE CHASE

Meanwhile the greatest manhunt of the age was on. Washington was astounded that gangland would fingerprint their threats to a Federal Judge in the greatest kidnapping trial in the history of Civilization, with Federal operatives swarming over the scene. George and Katherine Kelly can lay credit to being the objects of the most farflung, intensive and extensive manhunt (and woman-hunt) in history. In Ford pickups and sixteen cylinder Cadillacs, de-luxe equipped, they burned gasoline over a twenty thousand mile checkered zig-zagging meteoric course which crossed the boundaries of more than a third of the states of the Union.

Relentlessly, remorselessly, like a pack of well-trained hounds after a fox, the Federals trailed the slippery pair, picking up here a meager clue, there a hot trail, never more than three days behind their prey, some times within a few hours. Kelly changed cars as often as he changed his mind, which was almost daily. His

## THE CHASE

flaunting braggadocio was gone. His black hair, he had dyed a strawberry roan. His vaunted bravery and cunning were sadly waning. Every time he settled down for a night's rest, real or imaginary, pursuers walked past his retreat, or looked into his window. Katherine was now wearing a red wig.

The female of the species was, as usual, the more dangerous, and displayed the best mettle and most courage when final disaster threatened.

The Federals trailed the Kellys to Cleveland, Ohio, where they traded in their car and made a payment on a new one at the Cadillac agency. A Department of Justice agent was only a day behind them. There, Kelly received a telegram from Bates, who was in Minneapolis and St. Paul, performing the important and highly requisite task of exchanging the Urschel money. The message read:—

"Deal has fell through Jack and Tom  
have left Communicate with me at  
Box 631

(Signed) George "

Box No. 631 was Bates' Denver ad-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

dress. When Kelly and his wife reached Chicago they were utterly astounded to hear the newsboys crying the raid on the Shannon farm, and the capture of the Shannons and Harvey Bailey. To climax their discomfort came later street editions announcing Bates' apprehension in Denver.

Kelly's libationary art was usually confined to gin sprees. At heart he was a yellow coward, but gin seemed to give him the needed courage to go through with his deviltry. This sudden and amazing adverse turn of affairs sent a tremor of paralyzing fear through his gonorrhoeal veins. He immediately took mental refuge in a fog from the gin bottle, and his wonted bravado and cunning returned. With the aid of gangsters in Chicago, he bought a new Chrevolet car. He skipped to Davenport and Des Moines, and placed a Davenport license on his car.

Those sleepless Federals were smoking his trail so closely that a panic seized him. He hurried southward. At Brownwood, Texas, he bought a camping outfit and fled to the farm of Cass Coleman, a relative of Katherine, near Coleman, Texas.



Charles Bingham, Deputy

Earl Chapman, Deputy

**J. T. FAITH**  
**Sheriff of Wise County**

Decatur, Texas

Slick . Welch oil Company

March. the. 5.34

Dear Sir,

I Received your letter en regard to the Shannon Kidnapping Case Will say i never Refused to help them it was a misunder Standing they called me from Dallas i am a little hard of hearing i under Stood they wanted me to meet them on on the squar en Decatur and they come to Rhome en stead so i dont know who was rong i neaver did refuse to help any officer and never wil as long as i am sheriff i never had any idea wher they wer going nor what they wanted so i dont think how they can accuse me a beaing a fraid when i never new wher they wer going nor what they wanted me and my best Dep. Set hear till Day lite and they never come as soon as i heard they wer over bar i tok three of my dep. and got with en three miles of them and met them comming out from the Place they come while back and got a man come went through town hear and never ask me to eaven show them the way to wher he lived its my Pollitcial Enmie that is putting that news out i Wil send you a sworn Statement that i never new wher they going nor what they wanted and that i never refused to help any officer to arrest any crimel since i have ben en office and never expect to if you want to know any thing else that i can i will furnish you gladly

*J. T. Faith*  
Yours Truly J T, Faith

## THE CHASE

Under cover of darkness, Coleman took him over to the farm of Will Casey, giving Casey a substantial sum in cash to hide him in a little one-room shack.

Katherine went back to contact the outside world. Kelly awoke one night from a bad dream, dressed himself, and shook from his feet the soil of that hide-out. He left word for Katherine that he had gone to Biloxi, Mississippi. Katherine started immediately in pursuit. Perhaps there lingered in her memory rumors which had come to her years before of an intrigue with a blonde of whom George, in past years, had been inordinately fond. George stayed in a hotel room, in Biloxi, one day. He walked into the lobby the following day and suddenly decided he was being shadowed. His fear reached the stage of panic. He left his suitcases, clothing, guns, ammunition, and other valuables and fled back toward Texas. Katherine passed him enroute, missed him by one day and back-trailed him to Coleman, Texas. When that slender, gilded siren, now a human tigress, caught up with George, he was a pitiable figure. He was afraid of his shadow. The famous



## CRIMES' PARADISE

and infamous "Machine gun Kelly" had a desperate case of nerves, and every fence post that loomed out of the blackness of the roadway, was a replica of a Federal agent.

According to one informant, who testified in the trial of George and Katherine, George, while cooped up in one of his "one night stand" hideouts, walked the floor and raved.

"I would not have this Federal 'heat' on me for a million dollars. I was making fifty grand a year, knocking over tin can banks, with no heat on me, and now look at me. Nowhere to turn without hearing of one of those damned Federal agents."

On the road back from Biloxi, Mississippi, Katherine Kelly, in her Ford pickup, her mind distraught by the imminent peril of her mother, and the harassing thought of her lover's possible dereliction, was goaded to desperation. Three forms appeared down the roadway ahead of her—a man, a woman and a young girl. Katherine Kelly was desperate. She craved sympathy and companionship. Her five and a half quad fashionable shoes pressed

## THE CHASE

down the clutch and brake of her Ford pickup bringing it to a sudden stop. Her inquiry, accompanied by an ingratiating smile, elicited from the three pedestrians, that they were hitch-hikers. They gave their names as Mr. and Mrs. Arnold, and their daughter, Geraldine. A night was spent in a tourist camp. Katherine Kelly, the lonesome female, playing Santa Claus to the destitute Arnold family.

Katherine, by adroit questioning, ascertained that the Arnolds were not averse to earning some easy money.

Next morning in a sudden burst of confidence, the Kelly woman confided to the Arnold family her true identity. She asked if they knew of an Oklahoma attorney. Arnold readily responded that he knew a lawyer at Enid, who had once been appointed by the governor of Oklahoma as defense attorney in a famous case.

It was arranged that Arnold should go to Oklahoma and contact this lawyer, and employ him to defend Katherine's mother, Mrs. Shannon. Katherine gave Arnold \$500.00 and a note to a Fort Worth attorney. The note instructed the attorney

## CRIMES' PARADISE

to deliver to Arnold the Chevrolet car which had been purchased in Chicago, and which carried a Davenport, Iowa, license. Katherine hurried to the Cass Coleman farm, put George in the car, and with Mrs. Arnold and Geraldine, proceeded to San Antonio, Texas, where they rented a house at "160 Mahncke Court" in the name of Mrs. Arnold.

Arnold arrived in Oklahoma City with two chance female acquaintances, his sudden prosperity had caused him to pick up in Fort Worth, occupying the car with him. He had dumped the Davenport, Iowa, license over the rugged uplift of the geological phenomena at Turner Falls, in the Arbuckle Mountains, north of Ardmore. He registered at the Skirvin Hotel as "Luther Arnold and family." Shortly afterwards Federal agents registered in a room across the hall and in one adjoining Arnold's. Arnold contacted the lawyer of Enid and brought him to Oklahoma City. The Federals countered by tightening the surveillance of Arnold's room. After contacting the lawyer, Arnold beat it back to San Antonio to report to Katherine and obtain more money.

## THE CHASE

George and Katherine, together with Mrs. Arnold and her daughter, Geraldine, were occupying the house at Mahncke Court. Arnold was sent back to Oklahoma City, with instructions to keep in touch, and was advised that \$5,000.00 would shortly be forthcoming. When Arnold again walked into his room at the Skirvin, he was placed under arrest on a statutory charge. The two women, who had occupied the room meanwhile, had discovered the surveillance and attempted to escape, but were placed in jail on a statutory charge.

Instead of being taken to jail, Arnold was carried to that Federal epitome of inquisition, Gus Jones. At the end of eight hours "interview" Arnold had confessed his entire connection with the case, had talked to his wife in San Antonio, and had agreed, when faced with the possibility of being indicted for harboring criminals, to conceal his contact with, or admissions to, the Federals, and continue the liason with the Kellys.

When he disclosed that he had left George, Katherine and Mrs. Arnold at 160 Mahncke Court, San Antonio, Texas, the

## CRIMES' PARADISE

long distance wires again became burdened with important conversation. Federal agents, aided by local officers, placed an immediate surveillance over the house at Mahncke Court, but the big game had fled some twenty-four hours before. The house was raided and only Mrs. Arnold was found therein. She was adamant to any question. She did not know Katherine or Kelly, and was employed by Mrs. Armstrong, who had rented the house, and who was temporarily absent from the city. It was not until she was placed at the telephone and listened to her husband in Oklahoma City, tell her that he had "got religion" and was henceforth aligned with the Federal forces, and that she had better follow the same course or her future address might be Leavenworth, Kansas, that she decided to tell the truth.

Meanwhile, Katherine and George, accompanied by Geraldine Arnold, had left San Antonio for Coleman, Texas, promising to return that night. Federal agents had arrested Mrs. Arnold and placed machine guns in the house. George Kelly changed his mind, when he reached Coleman, and headed north. An air-mail letter

## THE CHASE

from Katherine next morning, postmarked Iowa Park, Texas, informed Mrs. Arnold that they would not be back, and instructed her to come to Oklahoma City and to bring Katherine's furs and clothes and register at a Reno Street address.

On the night of August 17th, on the farm of Cass Coleman, nine miles from Coleman, Texas, Katherine and George Kelly buried \$73,250.00 of the Urschel kidnap money. As soon as the dirt was packed in the cache, George, Katherine and Geraldine headed north like geese in the springtime.

They side-swiped Oklahoma City, by fifty miles, and the jittering George breathed a sigh of relief. Into Chicago they swept. Gangland placed its protective arms around them, but George could not be consoled. Looking out of an apartment which they had occupied only one day, he observed two men casually strolling along the sidewalk across the street. They glanced up toward his window. George was petrified. The game little Katherine could not dispel his fears. They slipped down the freight elevator and ducked into a picture show. Katherine parked George

## CRIMES' PARADISE

there, went out and rented a new apartment, moved their belongings, came back and got the redoubtable "Machine Gun" Kelly and took him to the new quarters.

But his nemesis in the guise of agents of the Department of Justice lurked in every shadow. That age-old instinct, which, in times of stress, takes an old range horse back to the pasture of his nativity, was calling the faltering faculties of Machine Gun Kelly.

At midnight on September 21, 1933, fourteen-year-old Geraldine Arnold was awakened by Machine Gun Kelly and his wife, and the three sped down the highway to Memphis, Tennessee.

## CHAPTER XIX

### UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

The scene reverts to Oklahoma City. The desperate, maniacal letters with which George and Katherine Kelly were daily deluging the Urschel family gave me the gravest concern. On September 24, 1933, I called aside Harold Nathan, Chief Assistant to J. Edgar Hoover, of Washington.

Nathan has admirable mental poise and exceptionally sound judgment. He had been, throughout the trial, the modifying medium, the co-ordinator, the contact, between the fervid state of flashing activity at Oklahoma City, and the calculating decisive machine in Washington.

"Nathan," I said, "this thing has reached a climax."

"These vicious letters, though they will not swerve nor change Urschel, his family, or his cohorts from testifying fully on the witness stand, nevertheless, breathe a threat of imminent danger which cannot be ignored. I am asking you frankly, man to man,—'Do you think the Federal



## CRIMES' PARADISE

Government should throw a cordon of police around the Urschel home?" "

"George and Katherine will make no offensive move while the Shannons are on trial in this court room," he said.

"I think by the time this trial ends, we will have George and Katherine in chains. If not, I guarantee you and the Urschel family, the full protection of the Federal Government."

On August 15th, after an hour's personal interview with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's son-in-law, Curtis B. Dahl, whose children had been threatened by kidnapers, I was so impressed with the immensity of the kidnapping menace that I wired the following telegram to President Roosevelt—

"As the man who personally contacted and paid off in their own appointed place, the kidnapers of Charles F. Urschel, I implore you to exert immediately the entire energy and powers of the Federal Government to the stamping out of kidnapping, racketeering and gangsterism.

I am convinced, that city, county and state police, limited by territorial

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boundaries and lack of finances are helpless in the warfare against this appalling menace, which, unchecked will threaten even the White House.

In my opinion there is one force, and only one, which can wipe out this insidious threat. My intimate contact for three weeks with this force, convinces me that it is seriously handicapped by lack of personnel and finances.

"Give to the Division of Investigation of the Department of Justice unlimited power, men and money and it will hang or imprison every gangster."

Joseph B. Keenan, admittedly the leader of crime prosecution in America, took a plane from Washington for Oklahoma City, the following day. Whether or not my telegram quickened this fortuitous circumstance, I do not know, neither do I care. Keenan was the answer.

President Roosevelt took an immediate and continued interest in the crime situation. He held a conference with Attorney General Cummings and Raymond Moley. Attorney General Cummings, with Roosevelt's approval, asked Congress for seven additional statutes which would give to the Department of Justice, power requisite

## CRIMES' PARADISE

to combat the growing crime wave. These new measures provided the addition of the death penalty to the Lindbergh Kidnapping Law; making it a Federal offense to kill a Federal officer, or to escape from one state to another to avoid arrest. Making the robbery of any National Bank or Federal Reserve Bank a Federal offense; bringing interstate stolen property under the Federal laws and regulating the sale of firearms and especially machine guns.

These additional laws would swamp the already over-worked Division of Investigation. A great hue and cry went up to immediately expand the Division of Investigation, which has less than four hundred men in its ranks and less than three million dollars annually appropriated for its efficient work. But as long as J. Edgar Hoover and his able assistant, Harold Nathan, are at the helm and are not hampered by political influences, the personnel of the organization will be increased and added to only by the proceedings, training and exacting requirements that have been adhered to, unswervingly, for the past many years and which has

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brought that small army of efficient investigators to the topmost rung of sleuthing fame.

Uninformed persons talk of the Northwest Mounted Police, (a noble body of law enforcers) and of Scotland Yard, rated by the uninitiated as the last word in crime detection.

As compared to the United States Division of Investigation, Scotland Yard is, in personnel and scope of activities, as a raiding squad to an army. Scotland Yard has in its files, 500,000 finger prints. The Division of Investigation has nearly 5,000,000. Scotland Yard covers only the area of London. The Division of Investigation spreads over every state in the Union and its Colonial possessions. It receives 2200 finger prints daily from more than 6000 contributors and agencies in the United States and most foreign countries. Scotland Yard is the London Police Force. It has no jurisdiction in Scotland or Ireland. In England and Wales it can aid law enforcement, outside London, only on specific request of local authorities and this has occurred less than a dozen times in the past three years.

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On April 28, 1934, in response to a message I sent J. Edgar Hoover, inquiring the relative duties and scope of activities of Scotland Yard, and the Division of Investigation, he wired me as follows:

"Metropolitan Police Department of London or Scotland Yard has general investigative jurisdiction over greater London with area of seven hundred square miles STOP The special branch of the criminal investigation department of Scotland Yard exercises national functions relative to aliens and immigration and guarding royalty and persons of importance in England and Wales STOP Division of Investigation Department of Justice has investigative jurisdiction in crimes it investigates over geographical area totalling three million six hundred eighteen thousand five hundred ninety six square miles.

(Signed) J. Edgar Hoover, Director  
Division of Investigation,  
United States Department  
of Justice."

Meanwhile the sensational trial continued. In the machine-gun studded Federal Building at Oklahoma City, Judge

## UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

Vaught was the calmest person in the scene.

Pioneering a new field in the annals of American justice, the veteran jurist laid the foundation for the Government's campaign to stamp out racketeering, with a broad interpretation of the new Federal anti-kidnapping act.

"This kidnapping act is one of the most important laws ever enacted," Judge Vaught began, after a battery of defense lawyers had attacked the statute, and insisted that the Court grant dismissals of the cases against their clients. "It was passed as an emergency measure to meet a condition which is absolutely revolutionary in its nature," Judge Vaught commented.

"There was no reason to pass this law except to stop kidnapping."

"Nobody has construed this act before me."

"I have as much right to start out right now as anybody. I want it understood that by my construction I'm going to do all in my power to put teeth into it." His listeners were fascinated. Defense lawyers were astounded. Gangdom with its lethal

## CRIMES' PARADISE

threats had made no impression upon this Federal Judge.

"A kidnapper is worse than a murderer and is so recognized in this country today. No more vicious characters exist in this land of ours than those who would kidnap a human being and hold him for ransom," the Judge continued.

The court room was stilled. The venerable jurist seemed to be talking to the citizenship of the entire nation.

"The statute itself is short: 'Whoever shall transport, or knowingly allow to be transported, in interstate commerce, a person seized, abducted, kidnapped or otherwise taken, and held for ransom or reward, shall upon conviction be punished and so forth'."

"The purpose of Congress in passing this act was to prevent kidnapping," he concluded.

He did not reveal, until after the trial was ended, that he had received a vicious letter on the second day of the trial, threatening him with death if the kidnapers were convicted.

The Government began to weave its web of steel around the defendants. Court

**THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATION AND SUBSEQUENT APPREHENSION OF THE CHAS. F. URSCHEL KIDNAPERS.**

**KEY TO MAP**

1. OKLAHOMA CITY - SCENE OF URSCHEL KIDNAPING - PLACE OF TRIAL  
 2. PARADISE - TEX. - URSCHEL HELD ON SHANNON FARM - BAILEY ARRESTED  
 3. TULSA - OKLA. - FIRST RANSOM NOTE DELIVERED TO INTERMEDIARY

**KEY TO MAP**

13. FORT WORTH - HOME OF KATHERINE KELLY  
 14. COLEMAN - TEX. - KATHERINE MAILED ADD TO FT WORTH - PAPER - MONEY BURIED  
 15. ARLENE - TEX. - KATHERINE BOUGHT TRUCK FOR TRIP TO WACO, ETC.

OKLAHOMA CITY  
2 PARADISE TEX.  
3 TULSA OKLA.  
4 ST. JOSEPH MO  
5 OKLA CITY  
6 NORMAN OKLA.  
7 KINGFISHER OKLA.  
8 MINN. ST PAUL  
9 LA CROSSE WIS  
10 CLEVELAND OHIO  
11 MINNESAPOLIS  
12 CHICAGO ILL

SCENE OF URSCHID KIDNAPING-PLACE OF TRIAL  
URSCHID HELD ON SHANNON FARMS-BAILY ARRESTED  
FIRST RANDOM NOTE DELIVERED TO INTERMEDIARY  
SECOND RANDOM NOTE DELIVERED 6 THIRTBOTH  
SCENE OF \$200,000 RANDOM NOTE TO NEWSPAPERS  
URSCHID RELEASED WEARING APPAREL BOUGHT AT ST JO  
BAILY ROBS BANK 2 DAYS PRIOR TO ARREST AT PARADISE  
RANDOM MONEY EXCHANGED FOR OTHER MONEY BY KELLY  
KELLY MAILED \$1600 TO R.G. SHANNON AT PARADISE TEX.  
KELLY PURCHASED 12.7 CALIBER CYLINDER AND A DILLIG  
KELLY NARROWLY ESCAPES FROM FIREHALL AT CHICAGO  
KELLY ESCAPES POLICE TRAP - STORES CADILLAC CAR

13. FORT WORTH - HOME OF KATHERINE KELLY  
14. COLEMAN - TEX. - KATHERINE MAILED ADD TO FT WORTH - PAPER - MONEY BURIED  
15. ADILENE - TEX. - KATHERINE BOUGHT TRUCK FOR TRIP TO WACO, ETC.  
16. WACO - TEX. - KATHERINE MADE CONTACT WITH HER LAWYER.  
17. KATY - TEX. - KATHERINE MET WITH HER FRIENDS  
18. DALLAS - TEX. - HARVEY BABY ESCAPED FROM DALLAS COUNTY JAIL  
19. DENVER - COLO. - BATES ARRESTED FOLLOWING ARREST OF BABLEY IN TEXAS  
20. TUCUMCARI - NM. - BOB BARDY ARRESTED WITH PORTION OF RANSOM MONEY  
21. MEMPHIS - TENN. - MACHINE GUN KELLY AND OTHER PRINCIPALS ARRESTED  
OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST:  
GUILTY PARTIES IN THIS CASE WERE LOCATED IN FIVE DIFFERENT STATES  
THIS INVESTIGATION WAS CARRIED ON IN SEVENTEEN DIFFERENT STATES



## UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

room spectators and listeners obtained a kaleidoscopic view of the perfectly coordinated workings and far-flung reaches of the Division of Investigation. Clues, trails, letters, telegrams, hotel registers, and even Pekingese dogs played their part as the Government reconstructed the conspiracy as spectacularly as the unraveling of a mystery yarn. Stacks of telegrams from widely scattered states showing the roving and communications of gang members before and after the abduction, were placed in the testimony, with Telegraph Company representatives from a dozen states to identify the messages. Handwriting experts added their testimony in identifying these damning footprints that had been left behind in the execution of this perfect crime.

It had cost the Government probably as much money as the ransom price paid for Urschel, to track down, ferret out, and clinch every detail of the kidnapping. But when it was presented in the court room in its chronological sequence, it read like a well-kept diary. Whatever hope the defense attorneys may have held at the beginning of that ten-day trial, must have

## CRIMES' PARADISE

received a severe jolt on the opening morning when District Attorney Hyde told the jury what he would be able to prove. His statements and claims were so startling and all-inclusive, it seemed almost an impossibility that the Federal Agents had compiled such a devastating array of facts.

As the trial progressed, the Government was able to prove convincingly to the court and the jury, every allegation made in the prosecuting attorney's opening statement.

Hyde said to the jury:

"The evidence will show that two men went into the home of Mr. Urschel under cover of darkness, that they kidnapped Mr. Urschel and sped into the night, out of Oklahoma county and into Pottawatomie county, to the home of a relative of George Kelly, one of these defendants, and then to Texas.

"The proof will show that the defendant Kelly, was, on or about July 15 or 16, in Dallas, Texas, that he sent a wire to his friend Bates, who was in Denver, and that wire said, "When and

## UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

where will I meet you in Oklahoma City?"

"It will show that Bates wired back to Kelly under the name of R. G. Shannon, and that he said, 'I'll meet you on July 19, at the Biltmore Hotel,' which was just three days before the kidnapping.

"The proof will show that they met in Oklahoma City, and that Bates at that time had the car they hauled Urschel away in. It was a Chevrolet, 1933, with an Indiana tag.

"We will show that Bates owned that car in Denver.

"We'll show by the apartment house owners, in Denver, where he stayed under the name of Davis, and some other name I can't remember,—I think Filton—that he had a Buick car and that they changed to his car after hauling Urschel away.

"We'll show by three people—first the testimony of two young boys who were visiting their grandparents on the farm near Stratford, that George and Katherine Kelly and George Bates were near there for several days prior to the kidnapping.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"We will show that they made frequent trips to Oklahoma City at night, but always when these boys would get up in the morning they would be there, back at Stratford.

"We will show that they made trips Friday and Saturday nights in the same manner, transferring machine guns in black cases from one car to another.

"We will bring two boys before you who will tell you that at noontime on the day of July 22, down near Stratford, George Kelly said to one of the boys, "There is going to be a kidnapping in Oklahoma City."

"We will show further that Katherine Kelly said also, 'We're going to be in the big money before long.'

"Yes, and we're going to show that George Kelly was there and that Bates was there. We'll put the old grandmother, a woman nearing 75 years of age, on the stand, and the grandfather of Katherine Kelly and they'll tell you that Kelly was there and that Bates was there and that Katherine was there.

"They'll tell you that these men came to their house under cover of darkness

## UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

that morning of July 23, and that they gassed their car, changed cars, and drove away. They'll tell you that Katherine Kelly drove to Fort Worth.

"Now the scene shifts to Oklahoma City. Charles Urschel and his wife were in their own home. They were entertaining guests.

"At 11:15 at night, there came two men. Urschel will identify the men. One of them said:—

'We want Urschel.' They leveled their machine guns on him. They marched him out of the house and started for Stratford. They drove out toward Sixty-third Street and there let Jarrett out of the car. They then drove on toward Harrah where Urschel recognized his whereabouts for the last time in nine days.

"There, near Harrah, they blindfolded him. They told him, 'we don't want to hurt you. When a car passes, you lie down in the back end of the car. If a car comes, we will be compelled to shoot.' He lay down, blindfolded, chained and handcuffed.

"The evidence will show that he had nothing to eat for 24 hours. That was

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from Saturday night until Sunday night.

"These kidnappers," Hyde said with a sneer, "were kind enough to give him a sandwich and a cup of coffee, prepared by that very Mrs. Shannon.

"They kept him handcuffed that night. The next morning another meal was prepared by Mrs. R. G. Shannon." (The youthful prosecutor was fixing indelibly in the minds of the jurors the name of the only woman thus far to appear in the testimony.)

"At noon she prepared another meal. That afternoon, Monday afternoon, of July 24, they brought in all the newspapers and read the headlines to Urschel telling of his kidnapping.

"They talked about a contact. They asked Mr. Urschel if he was a member of a church and had a minister. He mentioned Dr. Gibson (Rev. Samuel Gibson, of the First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City), but Urschel advised them Gibson was out of the city.

"They then dropped the matter, saying that the Federals already were in the case and that this might be a long drawn out affair.

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"Urschel will refer, in his testimony, to one man as the tallest man and the other as the shortest man.

"On July 24th, the two kidnappers, mind you, marched this man into the very presence of R. G. Shannon. They hauled him out of his home and took him down to Armon's house.

"They discussed with Armon if he would like to make big money. Ten thousand dollars, they said. The written statement of this boy himself will give you that—ten thousand dollars, they offered him.

"That was provided he would do what they told him to do.

"They made Mr. Urschel lie down, sleep on a dirty, filthy, stinking cold floor. They were not courteous enough to let him sleep in the bed. No. They slept in the bed and made him lie on the floor, chained and handcuffed, like a yellow dog.

"We will show," said Hyde, "that Armon Crawford Shannon was armed and holding guard over Urschel while these other fellows, Kelly and Bates and the others, were getting the money so they

## CRIMES' PARADISE

would come back to the farm and give him his share of the ransom.

"We will show how, on Tuesday, Bates and Kelly visited Urschel and stood behind him and removed his blindfold and told him to write a letter to his family.

"He wrote a letter to his wife and then another to John G. Catlett, his friend in Tulsa, telling them that the Slick estate was in a bad way financially, but that his life was at stake. He wrote:— 'If the ransom they ask is too high, just forget about me.' And he turned that letter over to the kidnappers.

"They said, 'Hell, you can't send a letter like that. We don't give a God-damn about the condition of your oil company. We want the money.'

"And they made him write another letter, which they dictated to him, in which he wrote that his life was in danger and he would be killed unless the ransom was paid.

"I fear for my life, he said, and he had a right to do so, for they had threatened him, not once, but three, and four and five times.



## UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

"That will be the Government proof, gentlemen. The government proof will be that the kidnapers outlined in the second letter what the contact would be and how the pay-off would be made.

"We'll show that after a second letter was mailed from Joplin, Missouri, and received Friday, Kirkpatrick and the Seeligsons got together with Lyall Barnhart, who got the serial numbers on the bills and within a few days turned them over to the Federal government, that \$200,000 was taken from the bank and it was paid to the kidnapers in Kansas City, Missouri.

"The proof will disclose, to go back a little bit, that while Urschel was held prisoner down on the farm, Kelly was present until Friday, the day of the second note, and that Kelly warmed up and got kind of chummy. We'll show that Kelly said:—

"This place is as safe as it can be. We used it in the old days as a hangout when we were running liquor from Mexico to Chicago. All the boys use it. After they pull a bank job or something, they come

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down here to 'cool off'—they 'cool off' he said.

"We'll show that the said Harvey Bailey, Bob Brady and Jim Clark had been at the farm—that he told all about the Kansas City massacre. We'll show that Bates said they always gave Shannon \$200 or \$300 to use the place as a hang-out.

"The proof will disclose that Urschel overheard Bates, Kelly and Shannon talking about money one day, that they were talking about thousands of dollars—and that immediately after that Shannon came into the room where Urschel was and shook his hand and wished him well.

"Further, gentlemen, we'll show that the day these defendants were arrested at St. Paul, a wire was sent from Minneapolis to Cleveland, Ohio, to George Kelly. We'll show that the telegram said, 'The deal is off. Wire me care box 631 Denver.'

"We'll show that was the box of Albert Bates or George Davis. We'll show that Bates was in Minneapolis at the time of the arrests there after the ransom money showed up. And we'll show that the Kellys lived there. Further, that these

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defendants from St. Paul took \$5,500 from Bates or Kelly or Mrs. Kelly.

"Now, when these St. Paul defendants were arrested, Bates wired Kelly at Cleveland, where Kelly was paying \$1,500 he owed on a Cadillac. We'll show that wire was sent in care of the Cadillac Motor Company, and we'll have the dealer here.

"We'll show that at this time Bates left Minneapolis by train—I think the Burlington—going through Omaha, and that at Omaha he sent a wire to Denver to the woman he was living with at 1275 Pearl Avenue, and that wire said, 'Be home soon.'

"This evidence will prove that this woman was not Bates' wife, but had lived with him under the names of Felman, and of Davis in Denver. We'll show that she had the kidnap car. We'll show that she had a Pekingese dog, and we'll trace that dog from January to the day Bates was arrested.

"Now let us proceed to the date the Shannons and Harvey Bailey were captured.

"The Federal officers, Gus Jones and Frank J. Blake and R. H. Colvin, and

## CRIMES' PARADISE

the others who worked with them, had been busy on the case from almost the moment that Urschel was kidnapped.

"And from the minute Urschel returned their work was concentrated on finding the place he had been held and the search finally converged upon the ranch of R. G. Shannon, about five miles from Paradise, Texas.

"Without a watch, shackled, handcuffed—chained, gentlemen—Mr. Urschel yet had retained presence enough of mind to note the twice daily passage of airplanes over the house where he was held.

"Timidly, without being obtrusive, he would wait a few minutes, then ask the time, figuring back to the approximate time the plane had passed.

"The proof will show that on Sunday night there was no plane. It had rained hard. Urschel noted the time the rain began and learned the time. He asked the direction of the wind.

"He carefully put his fingerprints all over the house, and noticed that the paper was off the wall in one spot. He remembered the peculiar barnyard sounds.

"He turned all this information over to

## UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

the Federal officers who met at the Shannon farm at dawn August 12.

"Shannon walked out and was met with an order to hold up his hands. In a building, the same building where Urschel was kept, we found Harvey Bailey sleeping. And, lo, at the same time we find a machine gun that Katherine Kelly had bought in a pawn shop in Fort Worth for \$250.00. And lo, gentlemen, we find it was the same gun that was used in the kidnapping of Mr. Urschel. We find it, gentlemen, on the Shannon farm.

"We will show that the officers found \$700.00 on Bailey's person, ransom money paid by the Urschel family. Now we go a step further in the story.

"We will show that the Shannons were kept separated and Mrs. Shannon was asked, 'Do you know the man we have out in the yard?' And she answered, 'No; he came here last night. We are hospitable southern folks.'

"Shannon, though, did not deny knowledge of who the man was.

"That's Harvey Bailey. He stays here some times. He has been here several times

## CRIMES' PARADISE

lately,' said the old man.

'The night before,' the old man told officers that Bailey counted out \$50.00 in \$1.00 bills and gave it to them for his night's lodging. In the kitchen cupboard a fruit jar filled with silver quarters and half dollars was found.

'Whose money is this?' the officers asked Mrs. Shannon, and she said she never had seen it before. The old man said the same thing. Strange, isn't it, gentlemen, that a jar of money should be there without their knowledge?

"They went to the kitchen cupboard, in the home, mind you, of Shannon and Mrs. Shannon.

"And they will tell you they did not know where the money came from. In the cupboard was \$50.00 of the money.

"Finally, Mrs. Shannon said that Bailey was one of the men who had been there.

"We will show that he had been coming to the Shannon farm, off and on, since 1930, using it as a postoffice, a stopover, as a place where he might cool off.

"The officers started toward Armon's

## UNCLE SAM STARTS SHOOTIN'

home then. Mrs. Shannon shouted at him: 'Armon,' she shouted, "keep your God-damned mouth shut; don't tell them a 'damned thing.'

"We asked Mrs. Shannon if she knew that a kidnapped man had been there all week. No, no, she didn't know about it.

"Did Shannon know anything about it? No-o-o-o.

"And finally, we got the story from Armon.

"They were separated, Shannon and Mrs. Shannon and Armon. They broke down, one by one. They gave four different statements. We'll offer three of them in evidence here. Officers, at least ten of them, will tell you that the Shannons made the statements, swore to them and subscribed their names to them.

"If we produce the proof of what I have said and show without a doubt this sea of circumstances, we're going to ask you to reach the conclusion that an agreement, a scheme existed on the part of all defendants to abduct, transport and hold for ransom, Charles F. Urschel."

During the trial, Hyde received a sinister, two-page letter from gangland in

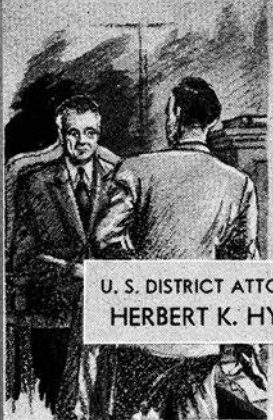
## CRIMES' PARADISE

Kansas City, threatening his life. The letter, among other things, said:

"You will be destroyed. The Shannons and Katherine Kelly must be freed. It will save you and others a lot of trouble if you heed this warning. You do not realize whom you are bucking. We intend to destroy you along with others if you convict these people."

The Lindbergh Kidnapping Law receiving its first test, did not provide the death penalty, but there was small doubt as the trial ended and Judge Vaught delivered his instructions to the jury, but that a quick verdict would be reached and the extreme penalty, life imprisonment, invoked.





U. S. DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
HERBERT K. HYDE.



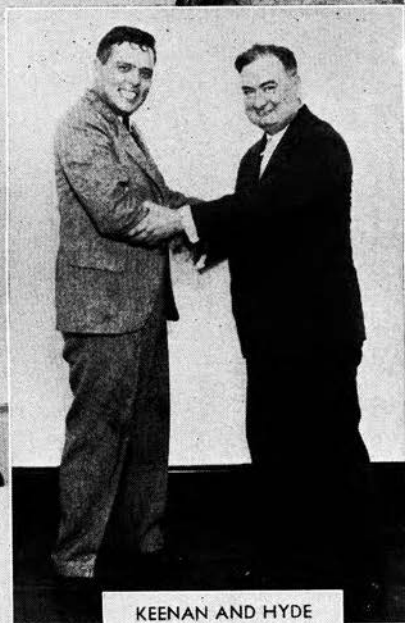
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY  
GENERAL OF THE  
UNITED STATES.  
JOSEPH B. KEENAN.



URSCHEL, KEENAN AND  
HYDE CONFER.



HYDE IN ACTION.



KEENAN AND HYDE  
CONGRATULATE EACH  
OTHER ON SMASHING  
VICTORY.

## CHAPTER XX

### BURIED TREASURE

Meanwhile another meteor had screamed across the red sky over-hanging the case. On the morning of September 26th, word was flashed throughout the United States that the notorious Machine Gun Kelly and his consort, Katherine, had been captured by Federal agents in Memphis, Tennessee. The crowded court room whispered the sensational news. The jury, closely guarded, could not hear, but sensed a big event. Suddenly the din of shouting newsboys down on the streets reached the court room and above the uproar could be heard the shrill voice of one newsy shouting, "Machine Gun Kelly Captured."

A sickening pallor overspread the faces of the Shannons, Bates and Bailey. Their last hope was gone. Bombastic Machine Gun Kelly had proclaimed by finger-printed letters and newspaper advertisements, right up to the last moment, that he would liberate the prisoners and annihilate their prosecutors. Something had

## CRIMES' PARADISE

gone wrong with Machine Gun Kelly's plans and alleged resources. After all, he was not, as he had blatantly claimed, more powerful than the Federal government. The capture of George and Katherine Kelly was the final smashing dash down the field and over the goal line of crime's great gridiron, by the well-trained, irresistible back field of Uncle Sam's Department of Justice.

When George Kelly and Katherine fled from Chicago to Memphis, they were getting short of funds. Their trail had been covered so closely, day and night, that no opportunity had been available for them to secure new money. Their repeated threats had failed to intimidate Urschel and his friends, and had only intensified the determination of the Federal Government to apprehend them, dead or alive. They must in some way dig up their buried money on the Coleman farm in Texas. But they dared not make the trip.

On a morning in late September, Langford Ramsey, a Memphis attorney and Kelly's brother-in-law by a former marriage, left Memphis in a car. He was accompanied by Geraldine Arnold. Driving

## BURIED TREASURE

day and night, he reached the Cass Coleman farm at midnight two days later.

Cass Coleman, who was being shadowed by Sheriff Frank Mills of Coleman and Charlie Winsted of the Department of Justice at Dallas, was thoroughly frightened. Ramsey told him that they had come for Katherine Kelly's "white furs," which is gang code for money. Coleman would have nothing to do with them. Ramsey raced back to Fort Worth to communicate with Kelly. He decided to send Geraldine Arnold to her parents at Oklahoma City and wired them that she would arrive there on the ten o'clock Rock Island train. The Federal agents at Oklahoma City got the wire.

They checked the Fort Worth telegraph office and found that the same man who sent the wire concerning Geraldine's trip had sent the following message:

"Ft. Worth, Texas Sept. 25, 1933

J. C. Tichenor,  
C-o Central Garage,  
Telephone 8-4811,  
Memphis, Tennessee.

Dear Charlie: Had several tough breaks  
ran into several rainstorms caused

## CRIMES' PARADISE

brake trouble Deal fell through Tried to get later appointment but prospect was afraid Impossible to change his mind Don't want to bring home a sad tale Can go on if advisable Wire instructions here Answer Western Union, Gainesville, Texas.

(Signed) Lane. "

The long-looked-for break in the trail of Machine Gun Kelly and his wife had come. The Federal agents sensed it in an instant. They had been confident all along that it was but a matter of days until they would snare him, but his vicious threats and semblance of cunning had attracted nation-wide attention. He was putting the Division of Investigation on the "spot." The Federals awaited the arrival of Geraldine Arnold at Oklahoma City at 10:00 p. m. Meanwhile, they had investigated the address in Memphis and had gleaned information which convinced them they were closing in on Kelly.

Geraldine Arnold, when questioned by Assistant Director Harold Nathan and Ralph Colvin, corroborated the information from Memphis as to George and Katherine's hideout. The end of the trail

## BURIED TREASURE

was near. The Federal pack was in full cry. Long distance wires between Washington, Dallas, Oklahoma City, Memphis, Chicago and St. Louis constantly hummed with the low murmur of Federal voices. Midnight came.

Out of Birmingham, Alabama, roared a plane carrying Special Agent W. A. Rorer and his assistants. Out of St. Louis another airplane, bearing Federal operatives, converged on Memphis.

At daybreak, September 26th, Department of Justice Agents and detectives from the Memphis Police Department surrounded a bungalow at 1408 Raynor Street. Three operatives entered the front door. The rear and all sides of the house were guarded with machine guns which were manned by Division of Investigation agents who were determined that, regardless of cost, Machine Gun Kelly would no longer play the phantom bandit. The men entering the front door were suddenly confronted by a hulking, strange apparition, in pajamas. The figure was crowned with a shock of yellow hair. In his right hand he held a blue barreled Colt 45 six-shooter.

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"Put 'em up," came the quick command from a Federal agent, voiced in steady tones but carrying impending death with every word.

The nation-wide feared desperado, the word-slinging, machine-gunning bandit, who had proclaimed his prowess, his deathly intentions, his determination to obliterate all enemies on sight, dropped the heavy Colt revolver so willingly and so suddenly that his right pedal extremity had insufficient time for involuntary action to remove it from impending doom. The six-shooter dropped heavily and ironically on the toes of the braggart gun expert. His hands, meanwhile, went high and imploringly into the air, seemingly with subtle intent to deface the wall paper on the ceiling. He appeared to give more immediate concern to the injured foot than to his injured pride.

In a back bedroom, peacefully sleeping, lay the red-wigged, usually restless Katherine. Six quarts of gin had been consumed by the inmates of that bungalow during the night. Probably she had gone to sleep to the tune of noises made by things dropping on the floor and the



## BURIED TREASURE

murmur of voices. George could not sleep long at a time. Thirty minutes before the Federals approached his hideout, he had tossed in his fitful gin-induced slumber, awakened from a dream in which Federal hounds were baying, low but incessantly, on his trail. He jumped out of bed, sneaked towards the front door, and seeing nothing to verify his nightmarish dreams, stepped out upon the porch and obtained the morning newspaper. Kelly must keep advised of his daily doings. He bought and scanned every extra issued. He had consoled himself with the front page stories describing how the Department of Justice had lost his trail, when he heard a faint noise at the front door. He grabbed his six-shooter and walked into the hall to investigate. Then came the Federals.

As soon as George and Katherine were safe in custody, Agents Jones and Colvin left Oklahoma City, going by automobile, at noon September 26th, headed for the farm of Cass Coleman, near Coleman, Texas, picking up Agent Frank Blake at Dallas, enroute. Sheriff Frank Mills, of Coleman, and Agent Winsted, had Cass Coleman in jail. Jones phoned them to



## CRIMES' PARADISE

take him back to the farm. Jones had his own ideas about the time and place to question a man about buried treasure.

When Jones and his party arrived at the Coleman farm at midnight, Cass Coleman was sitting out by the woodpile with Mills and Winsted. Midnight on a prairie farm in Texas usually is a rather lonely hour. The coyote prowls and howls, depending on the condition of his belly. True, mocking birds sing the night through, but so do crickets, and other insects that give an eery tinge to a prairie farm at the zero hour.

But to the astonishment of Gus Jones, and his brother officers, arriving at that farmhouse, there seemed to be much activity. An unusual number of automobiles were parked around the front gate of the fence enclosing the dwelling. Lights burned low from several windows. Jones, with his hand on his trusty machine gun, following his natural inclination of making the breaks instead of taking them, made inquiry concerning the unwonted commotion. He was informed that a daughter of Cass Coleman was at that time giving birth to a child.

## BURIED TREASURE

Jones turned to Cass Coleman, wasting no words.

"Cass," he said, "we have come for that money. Lead us to it quickly."

Cass slowly got up, hesitated, started to say something, but the sternly aggressive Federal agent stopped him. "No explanations, no excuses, take us directly to that buried money."

Cass Coleman started walking towards a cotton field, the officers close behind him.

"Wait," said Jones, "get something to dig with."

Cass walked back and secured a crow-bar. The party started, in the moonlight, trekking across a wide cotton field. Every officer was alertly watching for some trap. Coleman walked slowly and without looking back. He arrived at a small mesquite tree standing in the cotton rows.

"Where is the money buried?" asked Jones.

Coleman placed his back against the mesquite tree and slowly and methodically stepped five paces to the north.

"Right here," he said.

"Dig," said Jones.

The earth was packed hard. Unusual,

## CRIMES' PARADISE

torrential rains, and blistering summer suns had helped to strengthen and make more secure the novel hiding place of Machine Gun Kelly's ill-gotten loot. Four feet down in the packed soil the sweating Coleman ceased digging. The crowbar had struck a metallic substance. Jones placed his machine gun by his side and reached into the excavation. His hands came up holding a two-gallon thermos jug from which he removed the lid. It was packed to the brim with bundles of twenty-dollar bills.

A pale red moon loafed in the western sky. Crickets sang from the mesquite thickets and the prickly pear bunches. From a rolling crest miles to the north came the lonesome howl of a coyote. Voices seemed to whisper from the tall cotton stalks and the sunflowers across the field. This was the land where "Coronado's Children" had for countless decades, searched for buried treasure.

It was a setting to please the heart or the imagination of writers of lost treasures. But the stern Federal agents had no time nor inclination for thoughts of romance. Flashlights covered the scene,

## BURIED TREASURE

held cautiously by the officers so that the rays fell only on Cass Coleman and the hole he was digging. Machine guns stayed ready for instant action.

"Where is the rest of it?" asked the insistent Jones.

Coleman stepped four paces east and began to dig again.

From that hole was brought up an old molasses can filled with Urschel money. If this was an unusual and dramatic proceeding, it did not prevent those trained Federal agents from attending to the business features of the event.

Lights were focused on the pile of money. Several packages, most of them unbroken, were counted, to ascertain how much each bundle contained. The amounts were set down on paper, with fountain pen, witnessed and attested to by each officer present and then the entire amount tabulated. From those two holes in the cotton patch had come Seventy-three Thousand, Two Hundred Fifty Dollars! The fortune hunters returned to the house.

As they approached, some one came from the farm house and said: "A baby has just been born here."

## CRIMES' PARADISE

"That makes two on this farm the same night," jerked Jones. "One worth Seventy-three Thousand, Two Hundred Fifty Dollars was born just now down in that cotton patch."

The officers left the Coleman farm just as the red moon was disappearing behind the grass covered ridges. Cass Coleman was placed in the Coleman County jail. Winsted was left to complete the case against him. Jones, Colvin and Blake proceeded to Dallas, Texas, where, after a hasty breakfast, Jones and Colvin hurried to Oklahoma City. They arrived about noon with the bank roll of the invincible Kellys. These two agents had driven more than nine hundred miles in twenty-four hours, but their tired and smiling faces reflected the utmost satisfaction.

## CHAPTER XXI

### CHERCHEZ LA FEMME

Prison walls will likely forever seal the secret of Bates' portion of the \$200,000 Urschel ransom money. It is believed that Kelly and Bates each took \$80,000 of the total. The other \$40,000 is thought to have been paid to the "finger man" or master mind, to Harvey Bailey; to the Shannons and the gangsters who covered the pay-off with machine guns at Kansas City.

Bates, the surly, blond Denver gangster, from his cell in the Oklahoma City jail, when approached by United States Assistant Attorney General Keenan in an effort to coax from him the hiding place of the missing money, said:—

"I am not telling anything; you are wasting your time to ask me. I know that I am in a bad spot, now, and I am not going to tell you any lies. I am not in a position to deliver this money to you. I can't go and get it myself and I would not send you to get it. The people who would have to be dealt with would not

## CRIMES' PARADISE

deal with you and any attempt at present to get that money would result badly. I realize that as long as the money is out, I am a marked man in the penitentiary. Money has led to prison escape, and I appreciate the fact that my privileges in the penitentiary will be restricted as long as this money is out."

At another time, Bates said that he had turned his portion of the money over to a gangster friend, who lived in Kansas City and who had since been killed.

On Sunday, April 15th, 1934, a representative of the Urschel family was permitted, again to discuss the hidden money with Bates in his cell of solitary confinement in the Leavenworth prison. Although he had been, as he predicted, subjected to solitary confinement from the time of his incarceration there, he refused to weaken on his story.

It is thought probable that Bates' wife, when notified by the released prisoner at Denver, that Bates was in jail there, instantly fled with the money, leaving no clues behind that the officers were able to find.

It is deemed certain that Bates had car-

## CHERCHEZ LA FEMME

ried his portion of the money to Minneapolis to exchange it. Suddenly stopped in that effort by exposure, when he had gotten rid of less than \$10,000, he wired his wife that he would be home immediately. He had been in Denver less than forty-eight hours when he was arrested. Up to that moment he did not dream that he was suspected in the Urschel case. Therefore, he would most likely have left the money in his suitcase in the apartment with his wife. It is known that he did not place it in any safety deposit box in Denver.

It is thought unlikely that he would have buried the money at the time he was endeavoring to get rid of the \$20.00 bills for money that was not "hot." However, Bates made a remark in his cell at Oklahoma City one day during his trial, to which, at the time, no importance was attached, but which, later, caused much speculation.

The remark was made several days before Machine Gun Kelly's portion of the ransom money was dug up (in a thermos jug, four feet in the ground). Bates had said:—



## CRIMES' PARADISE

"If I never get out, there is one thing damn sure, no one else will ever enjoy my part of the ransom money. I have it buried in a thermos jug four feet in the ground and it will rot there."

Kelly's money was buried in a thermos jug August 17th. Even had Kelly been willing that Bates know the manner in which this money was buried, there was no possible means of communication between the two.

At the time this book goes to press, there is still unaccounted for, in excess of \$120,000 of the ransom money.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE MILLS OF THE GODS

On September 30th, the jury in Oklahoma City convicted Bailey, Bates, the Shannons and two of the seven Minneapolis defendants. On October 7th, Judge Vaught sentenced to life imprisonment, Bates, Bailey and Mr. and Mrs. Shannon. Because of his youth and his cooperation with the officers, Armon Shannon was given a ten-year suspended sentence. Clifford Skelly and Edward Berman of Minneapolis received five-year sentences.

Meanwhile Katherine and George Kelly had been brought by airplane from Memphis to Oklahoma City, and had witnessed the scene in that court room as Judge Vaught pronounced sentence on the other kidnapers, including Katherine's mother. The two women, despite the disparity in their ages, showed a striking similarity. Katherine's fourteen-year-old daughter, Pauline, was an interested spectator four rows back.

George and Katherine Kelly were placed immediately on trial. This trial

## CRIMES' PARADISE

was an anti-climax to the one which had preceded it. They were carried to and from the court room in an armored car preceded, followed and surrounded by machine-gunners. It was necessary to clear the streets before taking them from the court room. Thousands of people thronged daily to get a glimpse of the notorious Machine Gun Kelly.

His prestige, however, was beginning to wane. His boasts had been proven but the voiced delusions of megalomania. The question of how he had acquired his reputation as a machine gunner was brought up and thoroughly discussed, but never satisfactorily answered. As he was led out of the court house one evening, a newsboy crying his wares, shouted:—"All about Pop-gun Kelly."

The crowd roared with laughter and the incident so infuriated the outlaw that he struck savagely at the newsboy. Thereafter, his emergence from the court room was the signal for a chorus of newsboy cries, "Read all about Pop-gun Kelly."

The boastful George being led out of the court room one day, passed Urschel and menacingly drew his finger across his

## THE MILLS OF THE GODS

throat, implying a threat of death. A good pistol-whipping at the hands of Agent White of El Paso, the following morning, greatly improved Kelly's court room manners. Kelly had attacked White on the way to the court house.

The trial of George and Katherine Kelly was brief but filled with sensational moments. Kelly refused to take the stand. Katherine, in a desperate effort to salvage something from the wreck, went on the stand, but was a sorrowful spectacle under the merciless questioning of Keenan and Hyde.

Her demure attitude, her friendly smiles at the jury and the pathetic tones in which her answers were fluted, were powerless to help her.

The true story of Katherine's life would make rich pay dirt for the sob boys of the cinema. The flippancy with which she managed her multitudinous marriages would undoubtedly excite the admiration, if not the envy, of the Hollywood clique.

One of her numerous husbands, Charles Thorne, with whom she lived at Coleman, Texas, was found dead one day in

## CRIMES' PARADISE

his bathroom with a typewritten suicide note conveying the illuminating information:—

"I can't live with you nor without you."

Thorne had been a successful bootlegger, using Katherine as a delivery girl, at which she was no slouch. Katherine had talents. She seemed to rapidly recover from the loss of this husband.

Her records at Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, and other places displayed her tendency for vivid action. A relative of Katherine once told me that she had related to him confidentially, how she at one time, to avoid apprehension, after participating in a robbery, had flushed ten thousand dollars worth of diamonds through the toilet of a hotel room. Katherine had genius.

As a manicurist in Oklahoma City, young attractive, and if reports be true, with a Clara-Bow-come-on appeal, and a disarming smile, she would hold the hands of tired business men, (now sedate and retired,) during the day, and at night would hold those same hands in a necking party on a lonely lane. Out of the

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darkness would suddenly emerge Katherine's "boy friend gunman" and a perfect hi-jacking would occur.

After her mother was captured on the Shannon farm and the Federal Government demanded and obtained the naming of bonds so high that it became obvious that no one connected with the Urschel kidnapping case would ever be allowed bail, Katherine clandestinely made overtures, through attorneys, offering to place Machine Gun Kelly "on the spot" in return for her mother's freedom.

A handwriting expert once, answering queries for a Fort Worth newspaper, wrote Katherine:—

"Dear Mrs. Kelly:

"Your handwriting shows very good business judgment but you appear to be a little careless with money. You have splendid sales ability indicated and a degree of charm and tact that should be a wonderful asset in the handling of people. You also have some capacity for details and probably have the ability to handle figures. You have fine taste and enjoy luxury and beauty very much. If you are thinking of a

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business career, why not try selling in some gift shop. Or, you ought to do well selling clothes or furniture. You are optimistic and enthusiastic, and these traits have a way of communicating themselves to others. I think you are cut out for selling. At least it would do no harm to try."

The above handwriting analysis, addressed to Mrs. Katherine Kelly, was found in Mrs. Kelly's trunk on the Shannon farm in Texas.

Fourteen-year-old Geraldine Arnold, who accompanied the Kellys as a shield, on their mad dash to escape capture, took the witness stand and quietly, but in a firm voice, under the friendly guidance of Prosecutor Hyde, recounted in detail the trip from San Antonio to Chicago and back to Memphis.

"We left San Antonio to go to Cass Coleman's but did not go there. A man told us that the 'law' had been to Cass Coleman's place. George said we would go to Chicago and see Joe Bergl.

"We went to Chicago. Katherine wrote a letter to Mother on the way. Before we left Texas we changed cars and had

## THE MILLS OF THE GODS

to have our battery changed too.

"Where did you stay in Chicago and what was done there?" asked Hyde.

"We stayed in an apartment and they tried to phone Joe Bergl but they couldn't get him for two or three days."

"Did you see any letters written while you were in Chicago?" the prosecutor queried.

"Lots of them. George and Katherine both wrote letters and George put his fingerprints on them. I seen him put his fingerprints on them. I bought the stamps for the letters at the postoffice sub-station," she said.

"What did Katherine and George talk about when they were in Chicago?" Hyde asked.

"When they were writing the letters, they talked about killing someone."

"Who?" asked Hyde, amid breathless tenseness in the court room.

"George said he was going to kill Judge Vaught, Keenan, Urschel and Hyde," Geraldine said without hesitation.

"What did they say about Urschel?" asked the attorney.

"George said they should have taken



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Urschel to Arizona and buried him. Katherine said, 'That's what we ought to have done.' "

Resuming her sensational testimony with another statement which brought Bergl into the case, Geraldine said when they left for Memphis, it was in a Chevrolet coupe given George and Katherine by Bergl, and that he also gave them \$200 and a quart of whiskey.

The Federals learned a few days later that the unspeakable Bergl had told Kelly that he would not be seen with him, nor be caught talking on the 'phone to him for ten thousand dollars. But Bergl was in the same business as Kelly and had to help him to get rid of him.

"We then went to Memphis," continued the girl witness.

"Then they started talking about getting the money left at Cass Coleman's place. Langford Ramsey and I were to take a car and go to Texas and get the money and some furs that Katherine had left."

"What did Katherine want with her furs?" asked Hyde.

"They planned to go back to Chicago.

## THE MILLS OF THE GODS

First Langford Ramsey and I were going to get the money and the furs, then go to Oklahoma City and get Katherine's clothes and necklace. Then they wanted me to come back."

"They wanted you to come back to Memphis? Why?" asked Hyde.

"Mostly as a shield for them. They said I was a good shield. When I got to Oklahoma City I did not want to go back and mother did not want me to go back either," she said.

Katherine, a consummate actress, assumed the role during the trial, of a country girl who had fallen for the wiles of the city-bred gangster, George Kelly, and she made fair progress under the questioning of her attorneys. The cross examination of the vixen by Assistant Attorney General Keenan will long be remembered by the spectators who crowded that court room.

Skillfully he led her on and on until the falsely demure countenance of that woman changed to one of a cornered tigress and when the masterpiece of cross examination was ended, her eyes were narrow slits of yellow venom. The sweet

## CRIMES' PARADISE

girlish smile had changed to a fiendish snarl. Her soft tones had changed to darts of forked lightning. If she had held any hope in her heart when she took the witness stand, it had completely vanished when she left it.

The climax in the Government's amazing mass of incriminating evidence came with the proof that Katherine Kelly in person purchased the identical Thompson sub-machine gun used by Kelly and Bates in the abduction of Urschel and later found in the possession of Harvey Bailey at the Shannon farm. The machine gun was traced from Birmingham, Alabama, to New Orleans; from New Orleans to Fort Worth where it came into the possession of J. Klar, a pawn broker. Klar testified that he sold the machine gun to Katherine Kelly during the latter part of February, 1933.

The lurid career of this not unattractive consort of "big time gangsters" was drawing to a drab close. From childhood Katherine Kelly, a mixture of many conflicting emotional elements, with an insatiable passion for luxuries, diamonds, furs, and big cars, and with a cunning,

## THE MILLS OF THE GODS

reinforced by a most ingratiating smile, had lived a life of tumultuous changes. From the poverty of life on a dilapidated farm she had come to the possession of riches abundantly large to gratify her most extravagant whim.

At times she had been a creature of the kindest impulses, lavish in her charities and tender in her sympathy for unfortunates. At other times, when obstacles thwarted her ambitions or desires, she had coldly advised murdering the persons who blocked her path.

The trial hurried to its crashing finish. The jury made short work of their task. Katherine and George Kelly stood facing Judge Vaught with little outward emotion as he pronounced sentence of imprisonment for the "rest of your natural lives."

After the sentenced kidnappers were led from the courtroom under the heaviest guard that had appeared during the trial, Judge Vaught ordered quiet in the packed court room. The venerable Judge glanced at the rows of newspapermen, cameramen and the three newsreel cameramen, who had been grinding away with

## CRIMES' PARADISE

their machines a few feet from him while he sentenced the convicted kidnappers.

"Of its own volition and without apologies to anyone, this Court has permitted various facilities in the court room for the purpose of giving publicity to this case," the Judge said. "Our attitude toward kidnapping is such that we should like the world to know what the United States Court of the Western District of Oklahoma does in such cases. Further, the Attorney General of the United States suggested that this be done for the reason that giving of wide publicity to it would have a tendency to deter crime."

Federal prison doors clanged shut Sunday, October 7th, at Leavenworth on Harvey Bailey and Albert Bates. They were flown from Oklahoma City to Leavenworth in a tri-motored cabin plane guarded by ten heavily-armed officers and were carried from the Fort Leavenworth Military landing field to the prison annex in an armored car. Just eight miles away stood the Kansas State Prison, from which Bailey had led eleven convicts in his spectacular break the preceding Memorial Day.

## THE MILLS OF THE GODS

The only remark the close-mouthed Bailey ever made on the one-way ride going to Leavenworth, was when the party reached the prison. With a quizzical glance at the prison walls he remarked, "That's pretty high. Guess I'll have a pretty hard time making it."

On Friday, October 13th, Machine Gun Kelly was placed in a barred and bullet-proof special prison coach attached to the Katy north-bound passenger train and headed for Leavenworth. Eight Federal officers accompanied him, all armed with machine guns.

He was in his usual garrulous boasting form, and as the gates closed on him, said, "I'll be out of here by Christmas."

Harold Anderson, who had been one of Kelly's guards in the Oklahoma County jail, ironically asked, "What Christmas are you talking about, Kelly—1960?"

Kelly, Bates and Bailey were placed in solitary confinement. This they endured for a few weeks, when Bailey and Bates pulled a "hunger-strike." They were forcibly fed by prison officials. George Kelly, recalling the bread and water diet

## CRIMES' PARADISE

handed him for several days in the Oklahoma County jail as a reward for his rebellious attitude, not only willingly partook of the prison fare, but called for more. At this writing, it is reliably reported that he has become a Bible student.

On October 17th, at San Angelo, Texas, in Federal Court, Cass Coleman and Will Casey were convicted of conspiracy—accused of harboring the Kellys. Coleman pleaded guilty and received a sentence of one year and a day. Casey received two years. Both were carried to Leavenworth to serve their terms.

On October 22nd, Langford Ramsey and J. C. Tichenor were convicted at Memphis, of harboring and conspiring to harbor George "Machine Gun" Kelly and Katherine Kelly, his wife. They each received sentences of two and one-half years, to be served in the Federal prison at Atlanta.

Katherine Kelly and her mother, Mrs. Ora Shannon, were confined in the new Federal prison at Milan, Michigan.

On April 30, 1934, in the Federal Court at San Angelo, Texas, the Depart-

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ment of Justice added another and the last, before this book goes to press, to their long list of convictions in the Urschel case.

Louise Magness was sentenced to one year and a day in the prison at Alderson, West Virginia, after pleading guilty to a charge of conspiracy to harbor George "Machine Gun" Kelly from arrest by Federal agents seeking him in the Urschel case.

Mrs. Magness, alias Louise Seaton, told the court that she was suffering from tuberculosis and requested that she be permitted to return to a sanitorium at Talihini, Oklahoma, where she had been for three months before the trial.

Mrs. Magness, thirty-five years old, was a girlhood chum of Katherine Kelly. The Government claimed their investigation showed that she received \$150.00 by telegraph at Fort Worth, under the name of Louise Clark, on August 14, 1933, left by airplane the next day for Des Moines, where she met the Kellys and traveled with them to Brownwood, Texas. There she registered under an assumed name and purchased an automobile



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under the name of Mrs. H. E. Campbell, of Brady, met the Kellys August 17th, on the Brownwood-Coleman highway and delivered the car to them.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### TEN THOUSAND FOR A FINGER

A helpful concomitant in the apprehension of one notorious criminal in the Urschel case was a casual statement from Katherine Kelly.

Two clever young detectives of the Fort Worth Police Force, Weatherford and Swinney, through a system all their own, kept close contact with the underworld, and its desperate characters. They knew Katherine and George Kelly. Katherine thought they were good fellows. In her peregrinations hither and yon, through the half-world, she had never known these two young men to treat her too harshly. She believed she could use them to advantage in her machinations. She even suggested, in a friendly chat one night, that they were deserving young fellows and she wanted to help them. Her modest suggestion as a starter was that they "finger" Guy Waggoner, son of W. T. Waggoner, reputed to be the wealthiest man in Fort Worth, and let her friends kidnap him. For this trifling service

## CRIMES' PARADISE

Weatherford and Swinney were to receive \$10,000.

The two young men apparently took no umbrage at her brazen attempt to hook them into her crime ring for \$10,000. Instead, they begged as an excuse, that they were so well-known that discovery would be certain. Waggoner was immediately "tipped" of the plot.

"Well," said Katherine, "You boys are O.K. and I'll do you a good turn some day, but promise me this, if George Kelly or Albert Bates ever get into real trouble in some other state, we will wire you that they are wanted in Texas for bank robberies, and you boys come and claim them. Is that a go?" And she displayed her winsome smile.

"Sure, it's O.K.," they replied.

Weatherford and Swinney knew that Bates, Kelly and a man named Bentz were under suspicion for a bank robbery in the State of Washington.

On the day following the Shannon farm raid, the Denver, Colorado, police arrested a man, giving the name of Albert Davis, on suspicion of passing stolen Express Company checks.

## TEN THOUSAND FOR A FINGER

Bates did not know that he was suspected in the Urschel case. Although the raid on the Shannon farm house had been made on August 12, the information had been withheld from the newspapers. But Bates was extremely nervous about the Urschel ransom bills which he carried in his pocket. His experience in Minneapolis had convinced him that those bills were dynamite. A prisoner who had been confined in jail for sixty days on a minor charge was to be released the next morning. Bates managed to communicate with this prisoner and told him to go to a certain address on Pearl Street and tell Mrs. George L. Davis that he was in jail. "She will pay you well," he told the man. When this man was released he went to the address mentioned, gave the woman the message, as instructed, and she handed him \$200.00 in twenty dollar bills.

The following telegram was immediately sent out of Denver:

"Denver, Colorado  
August 15, 1933  
Detectives Weatherford and Swinney  
Fort Worth, Texas.  
George L. Davis held in Denver wanted

## CRIMES' PARADISE

in Blue Ridge, Texas, Bank robbery.  
Will waive extradition. Come at once.  
Advise coming by airplane.

(Signed) George L. Davis"

The two Fort Worth detectives having been in the raid on the Shannon farm and knowing that George and Katherine Kelly were implicated in the Urschel abducting, promptly phoned Frank Blake, the Federal agent at Dallas, that the Albert Davis held in Denver was most likely none other than Albert Bates, alias George Bates wanted in the Urschel case. The Federal agent at Denver was promptly notified, reaching the jail in Denver just in time to prevent the money, which had been taken off Bates, being turned over to an attorney. The lawyer appeared with an order from Bates for the money at the same instant that the Federals walked into the room. The Federal agent examined the bills and found \$800.00 in Urschel ransom money. Mr. Bates' sallow skin turned to a deep purple.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE WAGES OF SIN

The United States Department of Justice, in one of the most famous cases ever assigned to it, had won a sweeping and brilliant victory. Within less than ninety days after the victim had been kidnapped, sixteen persons had been sentenced to the penitentiary.

Had the Lindbergh Kidnapping Law provided the death penalty, there is little doubt that the principals in this abduction would have received that extreme penalty.

For fifty-six days, Machine Gun Kelly and his wife had led a weird, rapid, fantastic twenty-thousand-mile chase, followed doggedly every hour, day and night, by tireless Federal agents. Each agent knew that final capture was inevitable and that the names of George and Katherine Kelly would soon pass from their flaming prominence in public print to mere numbers assigned to them by the Government in some penitentiary.

Homer S. Cummings, Attorney Gen-

## CRIMES' PARADISE

eral of the United States, in a statement declared:

"In the case of Charles F. Urschel, of Oklahoma City, the total of sixteen convictions (six of which were for life) included convictions of persons who had given refuge and counsel to the actual kidnappers. Indicative of the far-flung character of these offenses, it should be noted that the Urschel kidnapping occurred in the state of Oklahoma. The victim was held captive in a remote rural section of Texas. The ransom money was paid in Missouri. A portion of the ransom money was exchanged in the state of Minnesota. Another portion was hidden in Texas. One of the guilty parties was located in Colorado. The others were found in Tennessee, Minnesota, Texas and Illinois.

"These seven states have an area of 683,000 square miles, which exceeds in extent the combined area of Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Switzerland, England, Scotland and Wales.

"This particular case which carried our agents into sixteen states (Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, Mis-

## THE WAGES OF SIN

souri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York), could not have been handled successfully without the effective and loyal cooperation of the local authorities.

"In this instance, as in many others, special agents of the Division of Investigation offered to, and received from, the state authorities wholesome, friendly and reciprocal help. Through this policy, which is one of cardinal importance and one upon which we have insisted from the beginning, we are able to coordinate the activities of the law-enforcement officials in such a way that in a short time and with the greatest economy of effort, the guilty parties were brought to justice."

Much water has flowed under the bridge since the night of July 22, 1933, when Charles Urschel was snatched from his home and held for Two Hundred Thousand Dollars of ransom.

Swift justice dealt in zig-zag lightning form by the Department of Justice, has encouraged American citizens to believe that our form of Government may exist and survive, despite the periodical



## CRIMES' PARADISE

ascendency of the Capones, Kellys, Baileys, Sankeys, Burkes, Vern Millers, Underhills, Barrows, Dillingers, and crooked lawyers.

Old man Shannon, reputedly the political "boss" of his domain at Paradise, Texas, until his avarice sucked him into the maelstrom of vice, finishes his years lamenting his errors in the loneliness of prison walls, unwept and unsung.

His wife, Ora Shannon, more crafty, more dangerous, walks the prison floor, or sleeps fitfully in her solitary cell, meditating or dreaming, on that prank of chance, which, taken at the cross roads of Destiny leads to happiness or maddening despair.

Katherine, like her mother, is in solitary confinement. The slender sinuous contours of her sensuous body have become burdened with fat from lack of exercise and enforced celibacy. She stares through the bars with the gleam of a tigress in her sombre eyes, wondering why George has not broken down those prison walls and liberated her. She is frankly skeptical of the stories told her of her former associates of the underworld.

## THE WAGES OF SIN

"Sankey, a suicide! Bosh."

"Vern Miller found in a ditch riddled with bullets—put on the spot by gangland! Slush!"

"Bergl dead!—The Touhy gang staggering under the merciless cannonade of the Division of Investigation!!!!

"Underhill machine-gunned by Federal agents!—

The deadening news, conveyed truthfully by a Federal agent (for a purpose) brings a pallor to the face that once could absorb shocks and slant them off with a disingenuous smile.

The feline purr returns to her voice, the pantherish stride regains its former pace. She asks questions. The trained Federal agent answers or parries them as suits his program. Panic, despair creep into the soul of the former consort of the famous "Machine Gun Kelly."

Whisked from a world of dreams by the sensational denouement of the illfated Urschel kidnapping; shot through the rapids of tumultuous events; landed in prison with the resonant tones of her irrepressible machine-gun husband, still blandly and confidently proclaiming that

## CRIMES' PARADISE

he would free her before the year ended;—and now—the cold gray dawn of the morning after. Time on her hands. A vivacious, scintillating female who had, throughout her life cared for almost everything but time—now with an eternity of time.

Machine Gun Kelly, catapulted to fame by the chance acquaintance of big-time gangsters and a headline pseudonym.

Bates, with probably more on his conscience than that which caused the silent, phantom-like, terrible Verne Sankey to commit suicide by hanging himself with his own necktie in a jail cell—and Harvey Bailey, the former locomotive engineer, whom fate decreed should take a prohibition side-track, once, for his first offense, by hauling a case of whiskey on his engine—all occupying cells of solitary confinement—with no knowledge of what goes on in the outer world through which they once blazed a lurid trail—no newspapers—no contacts—few books—the Bible—and Eternity.

Meanwhile the Federal Government, aroused to the necessity of drastic measures, is preparing an Island Prison off

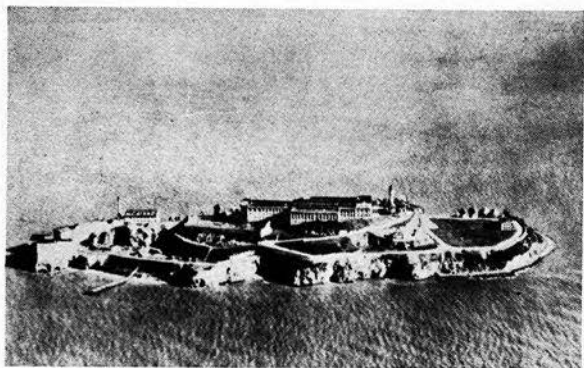
## THE WAGES OF SIN

the western shoreline of America.

Alcatraz—dug deep into solid rock—lashed by tides and waves that forever preclude the possibility of escape. To this strong-hold will be sent the desperate characters of gangland. The prison will be in readiness by early 1935. The first human cargo to reach this forlorn living graveyard will likely rival any that ever entered exile on the French Devil's Island.

## EPILOGUE

Into the limitless outlines of utter oblivion pass the characters who were the instigators of this thrilling drama, the greatest kidnapping case since the dawn of civilization. Jittering "Machine Gun" Kelly, stripped of his grandeur, robbed of his glamorous pseudonymity, relegated by the catch phrase of a street newsboy to the role of "Pop Gun Kelly." Sadistic, calculating, murderous Bates. Intelligent, forceful, cold-nerved Harvey Bailey, whose talents directed in other channels might have commanded respect and admiration. All are bound for the lonely Isle of Alcatraz, isolated Federal Fortress in the blue Pacific, where rugged waves and turbulent tides, beneath sunset's crimson tints or midnight's crescent moon, unceasingly moan the same refrain—FOREVER.



ALCATRAZ.

**CRIMES;  
PARADISE**

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**KIRKPATRICK**

*The Amazing  
Facts of the  
Kidnaping  
Racket*

●

**Stripping  
The  
Mask  
From  
The  
Ruthless  
Scourge  
of  
Humanity**

●



# ***Crimes' Paradise***

***By E. E. Kirkpatrick***

Mr. Kirkpatrick by virtue of his close connection, is the best qualified chronicler of this great epic-making case just as it happened. He was on the scene immediately after the abduction and was in association with the Urschel family at all times. He did not leave their home except for brief trips to contact cheats and chisellers. He carried the ransom money to Kansas City for Mr. Urschel's release. He was in constant touch with the family and the federals until all the abductors and co-conspirators, sixteen in number had been captured and imprisoned.

Mr. Kirkpatrick is a successful business man and a former newspaperman. Seldom in the recording of crime has an opportunity been afforded a qualified writer to be on hand during such dark hours of stress as the Urschel family experienced.

**THE NAYLOR COMPANY**

**918 N. ST. MARYS STREET**

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

\$2.00

# Crimes' Paradise

By E. E. Kirkpatrick

●  
*Profusely Illustrated*  
●

CRIMES' PARADISE is one of the greatest TRUE detective stories ever penned, and will hold you in its grasp.

CRIMES' PARADISE is not only a fascinating descriptive narrative of all the amazing incidents of the famous Urschel kidnaping, but it is also a brilliant expose and discourse of the kidnaping racket, that scourge of humanity that is terrifying America.

CRIMES' PARADISE should be read by everyone who desires to take a hand in destroying this dreaded evil.

●  
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